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THE
WORKS

Of the LEARNED

Isaac Barrow, D. D.

Late Master of *Trinity College* in *Cambridge*.

Published by

His Grace Dr. JOHN TILLOTSON,

Late Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*.

The Second Volume.

CONTAINING

SERMONS and EXPOSITIONS

Upon all the

ARTICLES

IN

The Apostles Creed.

The THIRD EDITION, CORRECTED.

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ARTICLES

OF THE

SERMONS AND EXPOSITIONS

THE SECOND VOLUME

To the King.

SIR,



Most humbly present to Your Majesty a Work, the Author whereof, my Son, was much the more dear to me for his constant and exemplary Loyalty. Not only the general obligation of a Subject always engaged him to Your Majesty's Service, but the particular favours wherewith You were pleased to honour and encourage his Studies, might probably have induc'd him to a Dedication of this kind, if his modesty would have let him think any thing of his worthy Your Majesty's Patronage. This, which I here offer, is, by those who are better able to judge of it than my self, valued as the most considerable of his productions: But it chiefly presumes to entitle it self to Your Royal Protection, because it is an Explication and Vindication of that Christian Faith, whereof Your Majesty is the great Defender.

And, Sir, I beg leave to take this opportunity to make as publick an acknowledgment as I can, of that great goodness Your Majesty has shewn in the acceptance and recompence of the fidelity I have through a course of many years born to the Cause of Your Majesty and your Royal Father.

Long may Your Majesty live and Reign under the happy conduct and blessing of that wisdom, in whose right hand is length of days, and in her left hand Riches and Honour. I am,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most Humble,

Faithful and Obedient

Subject and Servant,

THOMAS BARROW.

The Creed.

I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, dead and buried, He descended into Hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholick Church; The Communion of Saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting. Amen.



THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH
Explained and Vindicated,

In several

SERMONS

UPON THE

Chief Articles of it contained in the
APOSTLES CREED.

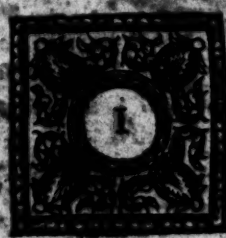
I Believe, &c.

SERMON I.

Of the Evil and Unreasonableness of
INFIDELITY.

H E B. iii. 12.

Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil
heart of unbelief.



If the causes of all the sin and all the mischief in the world were carefully sought, we should find the chief of all to be Infidelity; either total or gradual. Wherefore to dehort and dissuade from it, is a very profitable design; and this, with God's assistance, I shall endeavour from these words; in which, two particulars naturally do offer themselves to our observation; an assertion implied, that Infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart; and a duty recommended, that we be careful to void, or correct that distemper; of these to declare the one, and to press the other, shall be the scope of my discourse.

That Infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart, appeareth by divers express testimonies of Scripture, and by many good reasons grounded thereon.

It is by our Saviour in terms called Sin; when he is come, he will reprove the world of Sin—Of Sin, because they believe not in me; and, If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin; and, If ye were blind, ye should not have had sin; but now ye say, we see, therefore your sin abideth. What sin? that of Infidelity, for which they were culpable, having

having such powerful means and arguments to believe, imparted to them, without due effect.

John 3. 18. It hath a Condemnation grounded thereon: *He (saith our Saviour) that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God; but Condemnation ever doth suppose faultiness.*
 12. 48. *ὁ μὴ ἐκείνου τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀπίστεύον αὐτῶν, χαλεπὸν κρίνω ἐπ' αὐτοῖς κέρας.* Chrys. ad Rom. Tom. 6. p. 140.

2 Thess. 2. It hath fore punishment denounced thereto; *God (saith St. Paul) shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness; and, Our Lord (saith he) at his coming to judgment, will take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; whence among those, who have their part in the lake burning with fire and brimstone, the fearful, and unbelievers (that is, they who fear to profess, or refuse to believe the Christian Doctrine) are reckoned in the first place; which implyeth Infidelity to be a heinous sin.*
 11, 12. 8.
 Apoc. 12. 8.

It is also such, because it is a transgression of a principal Law, or divine Command; *this (saith St. John) is ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ, the command of him that we should believe; this (saith our Lord) is τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ, the signal work of God (which God requireth of us) that ye believe on him, whom he hath sent; that was a duty, which our Lord and his Apostles chiefly did teach, injoin and press; wherefore correspondently Infidelity is a great sin; according to St. John's notion, that sin is ἀνομία, the transgression of a Law.*
 1 John 3. 23.
 John 6. 29.
 Mark 1. 15.
 1 John 3. 4.

But the sinfulness of Infidelity will appear more fully by considering its nature and ingredients; its causes; its properties and adjuncts; its effects and consequences.

I. In its nature it doth involve an affected blindness and ignorance of the noblest and most useful truths; a bad use of reason, and most culpable imprudence; disregard of God's providence, or despight thereto; abuse of his grace; bad opinions of him, and bad affections toward him; for,

Tit. 2. 11. God in exceeding goodness and kindness to mankind hath proposed a doctrine, in it self faithful, and worthy of all acceptance; containing most excellent truths instructive of our mind, and directive of our practice, toward attainment of Salvation and Eternal felicity: special overtures of mercy and grace most needful to us in our state of sinful guilt, of weakness, of wretchedness; high encouragements and rich promises of reward for obedience; such a doctrine with all its benefits, Infidelity doth reject, *defeating the counsel of God, crossing his earnest desires of our welfare, despising his goodness, and patience.*
 Tit. 2. 11.
 1 Tim. 1. 15.
 Luke 7. 30.
 Matt. 23. 37.
 1 Tim. 2. 4.
 Luke 10. 16. Rom. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9, 15.

To this doctrine God hath yielded manifold clear attestations, declaring it to proceed from himself; ancient presignifications and predictions; audible voices and visible apparitions from heaven, innumerable miraculous works, providence concurring to the maintenance and propagation of it against most powerful oppositions and disadvantages; but all these testimonies Infidelity slighteth, not fearing to give their Author the lye, which wicked boldness St. John chargeth on it; *He (saith the Apostle) that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the testimony that God gave of his Son.*
 1 John 5. 10.

Many plain arguments, sufficient to convince our minds, and win our belief, God hath furnished; the dictates of natural conscience, the testimony of experience, the records of history, the consent of the best and wisest Men, do all conspire to prove the truth, to recommend the usefulness of this Doctrine; but Infidelity will not regard, will not weigh, will not yield to reason.

God by his providence doth offer means and motives, inducing to belief, by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his Ministers: but all

2 Cor. 5. 20. Acts 13. 46. 2 Tim. 4. 4. Matt. 13. 12. 5. 24. Job 21. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 16.

such methods Infidelity doth void and frustrate; *thrusting away the word, turning away the ear from the truth, letting the seed fall beside us, casting away the Law of the Lord of hosts; in effect (as those in Job) saying to God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

God

God by his grace *doth shine upon our hearts*, doth attract our wills to compliance with his will, doth excite our affections to relish his truth; but Infidelity doth *resist his Spirit*, doth quench the heavenly light, doth smother all the suggestions and motions of divine Grace within us.

What God asserteth, Infidelity denieth, questioning his veracity: what God commandeth, Infidelity doth not approve, contesting his wisdom; what God promiseth, Infidelity will not confide in, distrusting his fidelity, or his power: Such is its behaviour (so injurious, so rude, so foolish) toward God; and his truth; this briefly is its nature; manifestly involving great pravity, iniquity and impiety.

II. The causes and sources from whence it springeth (touched in Scripture, and obvious to experience) are those which follow.

1. It commonly doth proceed from negligence, or drowsy inobservance and carelessness; when men being possessed with a *spirit of slumber*, or being amused with secular entertainments, do not mind the concerns of their Soul, or regard the means by God's merciful care presented for their conversion; being in regard to religious matters of *Gallio's humour*, *caring for none of those things*; thus, when the King in the Gospel sent to invite Persons to his wedding-feast, it is said, *Of* *ἀμελῶς καὶ ἀπρόνοον*, they being *careless, or not regarding it, went their ways, one to his field, another to his trade*. Of such the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, *How shall we escape, τοιαύτης ἀμελῶς καὶ ἀπρόνοου συνειδήσεως, who regard not so great salvation, exhibited to us?* Of such Wisdom complaineth; *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. No man;* the greatest part indeed of men are upon this account Infidels, for that being wholly taken up in pursuit of worldly affairs and diversions, in amassing of wealth, in driving on projects of ambition, in enjoying sensual pleasures, in gratifying their fancy and humour with vain curiosities, or sports, they can hardly lend an ear to instruction; so they become unacquainted with the notions of Christian doctrine; the which to them are as *the seed falling by the way side*, which those *fowls of the air* do snatch and devour before it sinketh down into the earth, or doth come under consideration. Hence is unbelief commonly termed *not hearing God's voice*, not hearkning to God's word, the din of worldly business rendring men deaf to divine suggestions.

2. Another source of Infidelity is sloth, which indisposeth men to undergo the fatigue of seriously attending to the doctrine propounded, of examining its grounds, of weighing the reasons inducing to believe; whence at first hearing, if the notions hap not to hit their fancy, they do slight it before they fully understand it, or know its grounds; thence at least they must needs fail of a firm and steady belief, the which can alone be founded on a clear apprehension of the matter, and perception of its agreeableness to reason: So when the *Athenians* did hear St. Paul declaring the grand points of faith, somewhat in his discourse, uncouth to their conceit, falling from him, some of them did scorn, others did neglect his doctrine; *Some mocked, others said we will hear thee again of this matter*: So *Agrippa* was almost persuaded to be a Christian, but had not the industry to prosecute his inquiry, till he arrived to a full satisfaction. A solid faith, (with clear understanding and firm persuasion) doth indeed, no less than any science, require sedulous and persevering study; so that as a man can never be learned, who will not be studious; so a sluggard cannot prove a good believer.

3. Infidelity doth arise from stupidity, or dulness of apprehension (I mean not that which is natural, for any man in his senses, how low soever otherwise in parts or improvements, is capable to understand the Christian doctrine, and to perceive reason sufficient to convince him of its truth, but) contracted by voluntary indispositions and defects; a stupidity arising from mists of prejudice, from steams of lust and passion, from rust grown on the mind by want of exercising it in observing and comparing things; whence men cannot apprehend the clearest notions plainly represented to them, nor discern the force of arguments however evident and cogent; but are like those wifards in *Job*, who *meet with darkness in the day time, and grope at noon day, as in the night*.

This is that, which is so often charged on the Jews as cause of their Infidelity; who did hear but not understand, and did see but not perceive; because their heart was gross, and their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes were closed; this is that *νωδία*, that numbness of heart, which is represented as the common obstruction to the perception and admission of our

Lord's doctrine; this our Lord blamed in his own Disciples, when he rebuked them thus; *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken.* Of this the Apostle doth complain, telling the Hebrews, that they were incapable of improvement in knowledge, because they were *νωδία*, dull of hearing, for want of skill and use, not having their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. There is indeed to a sound and robust faith required a good perspicacity of apprehension, a penetrancy of judgment, a vigour and quickness of mind, grounded in the purity of our faculties, and confirmed by exercise of them in consideration of spiritual things.

4. Another cause of Infidelity is a bad judgment, corrupted with prejudicate notions, and partial inclinations to falshood. Men are apt to entertain prejudices favourable to their natural appetites and humours, to their lusts, to their present interests; dictating to them, that wealth, dignity, fame, pleasure, ease, are things most desirable, and necessary ingredients of happiness; so that it is a sad thing in any case to want them; all men have strong inclinations biasing them toward such things, it is a hard thing to shake off such prejudices, and to check such inclinations; it is therefore not easy to entertain a doctrine representing such things indifferent, obliging us sometimes to reject them, always to be moderate in the pursuit and enjoyment of them; wherefore Infidelity will naturally spring up in a mind not cleansed from those corruptions of judgment.

5. Another source of Infidelity is perverseness of Will, which hindereth men from entertaining notions disagreeable to their fond, or forward humour. *Ο φαίσις καὶ ὁ ἀπιστοῦς*, *O faithless and perverse generation*, those Epithets are well coupled, for he that is perverse will be faithless; in proportion to the one the other bad quality will prevail. The weapons of the Apostolical warfare (against the Infidel world) were, as St. Paul telleth us, mighty to the casting down of strong holds: So it was; and the Apostles by their discourse and demeanour effectually did force many a strong fortress to surrender: but the will of some men is an impregnable bulwark against all batteries of discourse, they are so invincibly stubborn, as to hold out against the clearest evidence, and mightiest force of reason; if they do not like what you say, if it cross any humour of theirs, be it clear as day, be it firm as an Adamant, they will not admit it; you shall not persuade them, tho' you do persuade them. Such was the temper of the Jews, whom St. Stephen therefore calleth a *stiff-necked People, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; who although they did hear the most winning discourse that ever was uttered, although they saw the most admirable works that ever were performed, yet would they not yield to the doctrine; the mean garb of the persons teaching it, the Spirituality of its design, the strict goodness of its precepts, and the like considerations, not sorting with their fancies and desires; they hoping for a *Messias*, arrayed with gay appearances of external grandeur and splendour, whose chief work it should be to settle their Nation in a state of worldly prosperity and glory.

6. This is that hardness of heart, which is so often represented as an obstruction of belief: this hindered Pharaoh, notwithstanding all those mighty works performed before him, from hearkning to God's word, and regarding the mischiefs threatened to come on him for his disobedience; *I will not* (said he) *let Israel go*: His will was his reason, which no persuasion, no judgment could subdue. This was the cause of that monstrous Infidelity in the Israelites, which baffled all the methods, which God used to persuade and convert them: *Notwithstanding* (it is said) *they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God*. Whence that exhortation to them, *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*. And to obduration the disbelief of the Gospel upon the Apostles preaching is in like manner ascribed. St. Paul (it is said in the Acts) *went into the Synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning*

Acts 28. 26. — Isa. 6. 9. Matt. 13. 14. John 12. 40. Rom. 11. 7, 8, 25. Eph. 4. 18. Isa. 29. 10. Ezek. 21. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 14. Mark 3. 5. 6. 52. 8. 17.

Luke 24. 45.

Heb. 5. 11, 14.

Matt. 16. 23.

Joh. 6. 60, 66.

Matt. 17. 17.

2 Cor. 10. 5.

Οὐ πείσας
δυσωπῆτα
σημεῖα, ἀλλὰ
μῖσος τῆς
ἐναντιότητος
ἐν ὧν ἡμεῖς
ἐσμεν.
Const. Apost.
8. 1.

Acts 7. 21, 54.

Jer. 6. 10.

— 9. 26.

Exod. 7. 4, 22.

8. 15, 19.

9. 12.

Exod. 5. 2.

2 Kings 17.

14.

Psal. 95. 8.

Heb. 3. 8.

Acts 19. 9.

cerning the Kingdom of God: But divers were hardened and believed not: And, Heb. 3. 12, 13. Exhort one another daily (saith the Apostle) lest any of you be hardened (in unbe- Vid. Mark 16. 14.) lief) through the deceitfulness of sin.

7. Of kin to that perverseness of heart is that squeamish delicacy and niceness of humour, which will not let men entertain or favour any thing, any wise seeming hard or harsh to them, if they cannot presently comprehend all that is said, if they can frame any cavil, or little exception against it, if every scruple be not avoided, if any thing be required distasteful to their sense: they are offended, and their faith is choaked; you must, to satisfy them, *Speak* Isa. 30. 10. *to them smooth things*, which no wise grate on their conceit, or pleasure: So when our Lord discoursed somewhat mysteriously, representing himself in the John 6. 63. figure of heavenly bread (typified by the *Manna* of old) given for the World, to sustain men in life; *Many of his disciples hearing this, said, this is a hard* John 6. 60, 66. *saying, who can hear it?* and — *from that time many of his disciples went back,* John 6. 67. *and walked no more with him;* this is that which is called being — *standalized* Matt. 11. 6. *at the word;* and *stumbling at it;* concerning which our Saviour saith, *Blessed* 24. 10, 13. 21. *is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.* 1 Pet. 2. 8.

In regard to this weakness, the Apostles were fain in their Instructions to use prudent dispensation, proposing only to some persons the most easie points of Doctrine, they not being able to digest such as were more tough and difficult: *I have* (saith St. Paul) *fed you with milk, and not with meat; for he* 1 Cor. 3. 2. *therto ye were not able to bear it — for ye are yet carnal;* and *Te* (saith the A- Heb. 5. 12. *pistle to the Hebrews) are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Such were even the Apostles themselves in their minority; *not savouring the* Matt. 16. 23. *things of God;* being *offended at* our Lord's discourses, when he spake to them Matt. 26. 31. *of suffering;* and with his condition, when he entred into it.

8. With these dispositions is connected a want of love to truth; the which if a man hath not, he cannot well entertain such notions as the Gospel propoundeth, being no wise grateful to carnal sense and appetite: This cause St. Paul doth assign of the Pagan Doctors falling into so gross errors and vices, *because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge;* and of mens revolt- Rom. 1. 28. *ing from Christian Truth to Antichristian Imposture — because they received* *not the love of truth, that they might be saved: For which cause God shall send them* 2 Thes. 2. 11, *strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:* Nothing indeed, but an impartial and ingenuous love of truth (over-balancing all corrupt prejudices and affections) can engage a man heartily to embrace this holy and pure Doctrine, can preserve a man in a firm adherence thereto.

9. A grand cause of Infidelity is pride, the which doth interpose various bars to the admission of Christian truth; for before a man can believe, *πῶς* 2 Cor. 10. 5. *ἵνα, every height* (every towering imagination and conceit) *that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, must be cast down.*

Pride fills a man with vanity, and an affectation of seeming wise in special manner above others, thereby disposing him to maintain Paradoxes, and to nauseate common truths receiv'd and believ'd by the generality of mankind.

A proud man is ever averse from renouncing his prejudices, and correcting his errors; doing which implieth a confession of weakness, ignorance and folly, consequently depresseth him in his own conceit, and seemeth to impair that credit, which he had with others from his wisdom; neither of which events he is able to endure.

He that is wise in his own conceit, will hug that conceit, and thence is incapable to learn; *there is,* saith Solomon, *more hope of a fool than of him;* and He Prov. 26. 12. *that affecteth the praise of men, will not easily part with it for the sake of truth;* whence, *How* (saith our Lord) *can ye believe, who receive glory one of* John 5. 44. *another?* how can ye, retaining such affections, be disposed to avow your- 12. 43. selves to have been ignorants and fools, when as ye were reputed for learn- 1 Cor. 3. 18. ed and wise? how can ye endure to become Novices, who did pass for Doctors? how can ye allow your selves to blind and weak, as to have been deceived in your former judgment of things?

He that is conceited of his own wisdom, strength of parts, and improvement in knowledge cannot submit his mind to notions, which he cannot easily com-

comprehend and penetrate; he will scorn to have his understanding baffled or puzzled by sublime mysteries of Faith; he will not easily yield any thing too high for his wit to reach, or too knotty for him to unloose: *How can these things be?* what reason can there be for this? I cannot see how this can be true: this point is not intelligible; so he treateth the dictates of Faith; not considering the feebleness and shallowness of his own reason: Hence *not many wise men according to the flesh* (or who were conceited of their own wisdom, relying upon their natural faculties and means of knowledge) *not many Scribes, or disputers of this world* did imbrace the Christian Truth, it appearing absurd and foolish to them; it being needful, that a man should *be a fool, that he might (in this regard) become wise.*

The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing humane conceit, and to the exclusion of all glorying in our selves; referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty and grace: It representeth all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent, forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves; such notions proud hearts cannot digest; they cannot like to avow their infirmities, their defects, their wants, their vileness, and unworthiness; their distresses and miseries; they cannot endure to be entirely and absolutely beholden to favour and mercy for their happiness; such was the case of the *Jews*; who could not believe, because — *going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit to the righteousness of God. Dextra mihi Deus*; every proud man would say, with the prophane *Mezentius*.

Christianity doth also much disparage and vilifie those things, for which men are apt much to prize and pride themselves; it maketh small account of wealth, of honour, of power, of wit, of secular wisdom, of any humane excellency or worldly advantage: It levelleth the Rich and the Poor, the Prince and the Peasant, the Philosopher and Idiot in spiritual regards; yea far preferreth the meanest and simplest person, endued with true Piety, above the mightiest and wealthiest, who is devoid thereof: In the eye of it, *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*, whatever he be in worldly regard or state: This a proud man cannot support; to be divested of his imaginary privileges, to be thrown down from his perch of eminency, to be set below those, whom he so much despiseth, is insupportable to his Spirit.

The practice of Christianity doth also expose men to the scorn, and censure of prophane men; who for their own solace, out of envy, revenge, diabolical spite, are apt to deride and reproach all conscientious, and resolute practisers of their duty, as silly, credulous, superstitious, humorous, morose, sullen folks: So that he that will be good, must resolve to bear that usage from them; like *2 Sam. 6. 21. David; I will yet be more vile, than thus, and will be base in my own sight*: But with these sufferings a proud heart cannot comport; it goeth too much against the grain thereof to be contemned.

Christianity doth also indispenably require duties, point-blank opposite to pride; it placeth humility among its chief vertues, as a foundation of piety; it enjoineth us to think meanly of our selves, to disclaim our own worth and desert, to have no complacency or confidence in any thing belonging to us; not to aim at high things; to wave the regard and praise of men: It exacteth from us a sense of our vileness, remorse and contrition for our sins, with humble confession of them, self-condemnation and abhorrence: It chargeth us to bear injuries and affronts patiently, without grievous resentment, without seeking or so much as wishing any revenge; to undergo disgraces, crosses, disasters willingly and gladly: It obligeth us *to prefer others before our selves*, sitting down in the lowest room, yielding to the meanest persons; to all which sorts of duty a proud mind hath an irreconcilable antipathy.

A proud man, that is big and swollen with haughty conceit and stomach, cannot stoop down so low, cannot shrink in himself so much as to *enter into the strait gate, or to walk in the narrow way, which leadeth to life*: He will be apt to contemn wisdom and instruction.

Shall I (will he say) such a Gallant as I, so accomplished in worth, so flourishing in dignity, so plump with wealth, so highly regarded, and renowned among

among Men, thus pitifully crouch and sneak? shall I deign to avow such ^{Acts 13. 41.} beggarly notions, or bend to such homely duties? shall I disown my perfecti- ^{(κατασκευ- tal). Luke} ons, or forego my advantages? shall I profess my self to have been a despi- ^{10. 16. Rom.} cable worm, a villainous caitiff, a sorry wretch? shall I suffer my self to be ^{2. 4.} flouted as a timorous Religionist, a scrupulous Precisian, a conscientious Sneak- by? shall I lie down at the foot of mercy, puling in sorrow, whining in con- fession, bewailing my guilt, and craving pardon? shall I allow any man bet- ter, or happier than my self? shall I receive those into consortship, or equality of rank with me, who appear so much my inferiours? shall I be misused, and trampled on without doing my self right; and making them smart, who shall presume to wrong or cross me? shall I be content to be no-body in the world! So the proud man will say in his heart, contesting the doctrines and duties of our Religion, and so disputing himself into Infidelity.

10. Another spring of Infidelity is pusillanimity, or want of good resoluti- on and courage: ^{δεδολοι καὶ ἀπίστοι, Cowards and Infidels} are well joined among ^{Apost. 21. 8.} those who are devoted to the fiery Lake; for timorous men dare not believe such doctrines, which engage them upon undertaking difficult, laborious, dan- gerous enterprizes; upon undergoing hardships, pains, wants, disgraces; up- on encountering those mighty and fierce enemies, with whom every faithful man continually doth wage war.

They have not the heart to look the World in the face, when it frowneth at them, menacing persecution and disgrace; but *when affliction ariseth for the word, they are presently scandalized.* It is said in the Gospel, that *no man spake* ^{Matt. 13. 21.} *freely of our Lord for fear of the Jews;* as it so did smother the profession and muzzle the mouth; so it doth often stifle Faith it self, and quell the heart, men fearing to harbour in their very thoughts points dangerous, and discountenan- ced by worldly power. ^(John 7. 13. 9. 22. 19. 36.)

They have not also courage to adventure a combat with their own flesh, and those *lusts, which war against their Souls;* to set upon correcting their ^{James 4. 1.} temper, curbing their appetites, bridling their passions; keeping flesh and ^{1 Pet. 2. 11.} blood in order; upon pulling out their right Eyes, and cutting off their right ^{Rom. 7. 23.} Hands, and crucifying their members; it daunteth them to attempt duties so harsh and painful.

They have not the resolution to withstand and repel temptations, and in so doing to *wrestle with Principalities and Powers;* to resist and baffle the *strong* ^{Eph. 6. 12.} *one.* To part with their ease, their wealth, their pleasure, their credit, their ^(Luke 14. 31.) accommodations of life, is a thing, any thought whereof doth quash all incli- nation in a faint and fearful heart of complying with the Christian Doctrine.

Christianity is a Warfare, living after its rules is called *fighting the good fight* ^{1 Tim. 1. 18.} *of Faith;* every true Christian is a *good soldier of Jesus Christ;* the state of Chri- ^{Heb. 12.} tians must be sometimes like that of the Apostles; who were *troubled on every* ^{1 Tim. 6. 12.} *side; without were fightings, within were fears:* great courage therefore, and un- ^{2 Cor. 7. 5.} daunted resolution are required toward the undertaking this religion, and the per- sisting in it cordially.

11. Infidelity doth also rise from sturdiness, fierceness, wildness, untam- ed animosity of spirit; so that a man will not endure to have his will cross- ed, to be under any law, to be curb'd from any thing, which he is prone to affect.

12. Blind zeal, grounded upon prejudice, disposing men to stiff adherence unto that, which they have once been addicted and accustomed to, is in the Scrip- ture frequently represented as a cause of Infidelity. So the *Jews being filled* ^{Acts 13. 45.} *with zeal, contradicted the things spoken by Saint Paul;* flying at his doctrine, ^{17. 5. 5. 17.} without weighing it: So *by instinct of zeal* did St. Paul himself persecute the ^{Rom. 10. 2.} Church; being *exceedingly zealous for the traditions delivered by his fathers.* ^{Gal. 4. 17.} ^{Phil. 3. 6.}

καὶ ζήλον δυνάμεν. Gal. 1. 14. Acts 26. 11. περιεσσωτ ἱμμανόμεν

In fine, Infidelity doth issue from corruption of mind by any kind of brutish lust, any irregular passion, any bad inclination or habit: any such evil disposition of soul doth obstruct the admissi- on or entertainment of that doctrine, which doth prohibit and check it; doth condemn it, and brand it with infamy; doth denounce punishment and woe to it: whence *men of*

Οὐ βλάβειν ποιεῖα συντρέφοντες ἀ- ναγκάζει τὰ χεῖρα πρὸς τὸ τῶν πα- τέρων δογματῶν ὕψος, ἀλλὰ χεῖρ πάν- των καθαρῶν ἐπὶ πατρὶν ἢ μέλλοντα ἀπερὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Chryl. in 1 Cor. 8.

corrupt

2 Tim. 3. 8. *corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith; and Men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth*, are attributes well conjoined by St. Paul, as commonly jumping together in practice; and to them (saith he) *that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind, and conscience is defiled*; such pollution is not only consequent to, and connected with, but antecedent to Infidelity, blinding the mind so as not to see the truth, and perverting the will so as not to close with it.

Faith and a good conscience are twins, born together, inseparable from each other, living and dying together; for the first, *faith* is (as St. Peter telleth us) nothing else but *the stipulation of a good conscience*, fully persuaded that Christianity is true, and firmly resolving to comply with it: and, *The end* (or drift, and purport) of the Evangelical doctrine is *charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned*; whence those Apostolical precepts, to hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience; and, to hold faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning the faith have made shipwreck; a man void of good conscience will not embark in Christianity; and having laid good conscience aside, he soon will make shipwreck of faith, by apostacy from it. Resolute indulgence to any one lust, is apt to produce this effect.

Matt. 19. 23. If a man be covetous, he can hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven, or submit to that heavenly law, which forbiddeth us to treasure up treasures upon earth; which chargeth us to be liberal in communication of our goods; so as to give unto every one that asketh; which in some cases requireth to sell all our goods, and to give them to the poor; which declareth, that whosoever doth not bid farewell to all that he hath, cannot be a disciple of Christ; which ascribeth happiness to the poor, and denounceth woe to the rich, who have their consolation here, preach such doctrine to a covetous person, and as the young Gentleman, who had great possessions, he will go his way sorrowful; or will do like the Pharisees, who were covetous, and having heard our Saviour discourse such things, derided him; for the love of money (saith St. Paul) is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith; ἀπεπλανήθησαν, they have wandered away, or apostatized from the faith.

If a man be ambitious, he will not approve that doctrine, which prohibiteth us to affect, to seek, to admit glory, or to do any thing for its sake; but purely to seek God's honour, and in all our actions to regard it as our principal aim: which greatly disparageth all worldly glory as vain, transitory, mischievous; which commandeth us in honour to prefer others before our selves, and to sit down in the lowest room; which promiseth the best rewards to humility, and menaceth, that whoever exalteth himself, shall be abased; the profession and practice whereof are commonly attended with disgrace; such doctrines ambitious minds cannot admit; as it proved among the Jews; who therefore could not believe, because they received glory from one another; who therefore would not profess the faith, because they loved the glory of men, rather than the glory of God.

If a man be envious, he will not like that doctrine, which enjoyneth him to desire the good of his neighbour, as his own; to have complacency in the prosperity and dignity of his brethren; not to seek his own, but every man another's wealth, or welfare; to rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with those that mourn; which chargeth us to lay aside all envyings and emulations, under pain of damnation; he therefore who is possessed with an envious spirit, or evil eye; will look ill upon this doctrine; as the Jews did, who being full of envy and emulation, did reject the Gospel; it being a grievous eye-sore to them, that the poor Gentiles were thereby admitted to favour and mercy.

If a man be revengeful or spiteful, he will be scandalized at that law, which commandeth us to love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, to pray for them that despitefully use us; which forbiddeth us to resist the evil; to render evil for evil, or railing for railing; which chargeth us to bear patiently, and freely to remit all injuries, under penalty of forfeiting all hopes of mercy from God; which requireth us to depose all wrath, animosity, and malice, as inconsistent with our salvation; which doctrine how can a heart swelling with rancorous grudge, or boiling with anger,

Matt. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 20.
Rom. 12. 17. 1 Pet. 3. 9. Matt. 5. 39.
1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 15.

Col. 3. 13. Eph. 4. 32. Matt. 6. 15.
18. 35.

Col. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Gal. 5. 20.
Eph. 4. 31.

ger, embrace? seeing it must be in meekness that we must receive the engrafted word, that is able to save our souls.

If a man be intemperate, he will loath that doctrine, the precepts of which are, that we be temperate in all things, that we bring under our bodies, that we endure hardship as good souldiers of Christ; to avoid all excess; to possess our vessels in sanctification and honour; to mortifie our members upon earth, to crucifie the flesh with its affections and lusts; to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; with which precepts how can a luxurious and filthy heart comport?

In fine, whatever corrupt affection a man be possessed with, it will work in him a distaste, and repugnance to that doctrine, which indispenfably, as a condition of salvation, doth prescribe and require universal holiness, purity, innocence, vertue and goodness; which doth not allow any one sin to be fostered or indulged; which threatneth wrath and vengeance upon all impiety, iniquity, impurity, wherein we do obstinately persist; indifferently, without any reserve or remedy; wherein the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, that detain the truth in unrighteousness.

An impure, a dissolute, a passionate soul cannot affect so holy notions, cannot comply with so strict rules, as the Gospel doth recommend; as a sore eye cannot like the bright day; as a sickly palate cannot relish savoury food. Every one that doth evil, hateth the light, because it discovereth to him his own vileness and folly; because it detecteth the sadness and wofulness of his condition; because it kindleth anguish and remorse within him; because it checketh him in the free pursuit of his bad designs, it dampeth the brisk enjoyment of his unlawful pleasures, it robbeth him of satisfaction and glee in any vicious course of practice.

Every man is unwilling to entertain a bad conceit of himself, and to pass on himself a sad doom: he therefore will be apt to reject that doctrine, which, being supposed true, he cannot but confess himself to be an arrant fool, he cannot but grant himself a forlorn wretch.

No man liketh to be galled, to be stung, to be racked with a sense of guilt, to be scared with a dread of punishment; to live under awe and apprehension of imminent danger; gladly therefore would he shun that doctrine, which demonstrateth him a grievous sinner, which speaketh dismal terrour, which thundreth ghastly woe upon him.

He cannot love that truth, which is so much his Enemy, which so rudely treateth and severely persecuteth him; which telleth him so bad and unwelcome news. *

Who would be content to deem omnipotency engaged against him? to fancy himself standing on the brink of a fiery lake? to hear a roaring Lion ready to devour him? to suppose that certain, which is so dreadful and sad to him?

Hence it is, that the carnal mind is enmity to God; hence do bad men rebel against the light; hence Foolish men shall not attain to wisdom, and sinners shall not see her; for she is far from pride, and men that are liars cannot remember her.

Hence a man resolutely wicked cannot but be willing to be an Infidel, in his own defence, for his own quiet and ease; faith being a companion very incommo-
dious, intollerably troublesome to a bad conscience.

ἡ ἐπιθυμία γίνεται, &c. Chryl. Tom. 6. Orat. 12. (p. 140.)

Ὅτι εἰ μὴ ἀπολείψωμεν πάντα καὶ ἑξέλθωμεν ὀπίσθεν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, οὐ δύναμεθα εἶναι αὐτοῦ μαθηταί, &c. Chryl. Tom. 5. Or. 55.

Being resolved not to forsake his lusts, he must quit those opinions, which cross them; seeing it expedient that the Gospel should be false, he will be inclinable to think it so; thus he sinketh down, thus he tumbleth himself headlong into the gulf of Infidelity.

The custom of sinning doth also by degrees so abate, and at length so destroy the loathsomeness, the ugliness, the horror thereof, doth so reconcile it

2 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 25, 27.
2 Tim. 2. 3. 1. 8. 4. 5. Eph. 5. 18.
1 Thes. 4. 4. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 24.
2 Pet. 2. 11.

Eph. 2. 11.

4. 22.

Rom. 6. 6.

1 Thess. 4. 3.

Eph. 5. 6.

Col. 3. 6.

Rom. 1. 18.

2. 8.

Ἡ ἐμπαθὴς ψυχὴ ὁρᾷ δύναται μέγα τι καὶ γενναῖον ἰδεῖν, ἀλλ' ὡς πῶς ὁποῖ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀπορρίπτει ἀμβλυωπία καὶ ἀπομένει τῷ κατεπιδότῳ Chryl. in Joh. Orat. 25.

Ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀπὸ τρεῶν διαφθαρμένων, ἐκ τῆς πολυπλοκότητος μόνον ἀναίρεσι σκοτεινῶν τῷ διανοεῖν. Ibid.
John 3. 20.

* They hated

knowledge,

and did not

chuse the fear

of the LORD,

Prov. 1. 29.

—5. 12.

Rom. 8. 7.

Job 24. 13.

Eccles 15. 7.

Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ἢ

ἐξολογῆσαι ἐν

τῷ θεῷ τὴν

ἐκπλήρωσιν

ἐκλελυῖσθαι

it to our minds, yea conciliateth such a friendship to it, that we cannot easily believe it so horrid and base a thing, as by the Gospel it is represented to us.

*Ἡ ἁρμεία
φθασμένη τῆ
ἀρχῆς. Vid.
Chryl. in
Joh. Orat. 5.
(p. 582.)*

Vicious practice doth also weaken the judgment, and stupify the faculties; so that we cannot clearly apprehend, or judge soundly about spiritual matters.

The same also quencheth God's spirit, and driveth away his grace, which is requisite to the production and preservation of faith in us.

14. In fine, from what spirit Infidelity doth proceed, we may see by the principles commonly with it espoused for its support and countenance, by its great Masters and Patrons; all which do rankly favour of baseness and ill nature.

They do libel and revile mankind as void of all true goodness; from the worst qualities, of which they are conscious themselves, or can observe in others, patching up an odious character of it; thus shrowding themselves under common blame from that which is due to their own wickedness; and dispensing with that charity and honesty, which is by God's law required from them toward their neighbour; and having so bad an opinion of all men, they consequently must bear ill-will toward them; it not being possible to love that, which we do not esteem.

They allow nothing in man to be immaterial, or immortal; so turning him into a beast, or into a puppet, a whirlegig of fate or chance.

They ascribe all actions and events to necessity or external impulse, so raising the grounds of justice, and all virtue, that no man may seem responsible for what he doth, commendable or culpable, amiable or detestable.

They explode all natural difference of good and evil; deriding benignity, mercy, pity, gratitude, ingenuity; that is, all instances of good-nature, as childish and silly dispositions.

All the reliques of God's image in man, which raise him above a beast, and distinguish him from a fiend, they scorn and expose to contempt.

They extol power as the most admirable, and disparage goodness as a pitiful thing; so preferring a Devil before an Angel.

They discard conscience, as a bugbear, to fright children and fools; allowing men to compass their designs by violence, fraud, slander, any wrongful ways; so banishing all the securities (beside selfishness and slavish fear) of government, conversation and commerce; so that nothing should hinder a man (if he can do it with advantage to himself, and probable safety) to rebel against his Prince, to betray his Country, to abuse his friend, to cheat any man with whom he dealeth.

Such are the principles (not only avowed in common discourse, but taught and maintained in the writings) of our Infidels; whereby the sources of it do appear to be a deplorable blindness, and desperate corruption of mind; an extinction of natural light, and extirpation of good-nature. Farther,

III. The naughtiness of Infidelity will appear by considering its effects and consequences; which are plainly a spawn of all vices and villainies; a deluge of all mischiefs, and outrages upon the earth: for faith being removed, together with it all conscience goeth, no virtue can remain; all sobriety of mind, all justice in dealing; all security in conversation are packed away; nothing resteth to encourage men unto any good, or restrain them from any evil; all hopes of reward from God, all fears of punishment from him being discarded. No principle or rule of practice is left, beside brutish sensuality, fond self-love, private interest, in their highest pitch, without any bound or curb; which therefore will dispose men to do nothing but to prey on each other, with all cruel violence, and base treachery. Every man thence will be a God to himself, a Fiend to each other; so that necessarily the world will thence be turned into a *Chaos* and a Hell, full of iniquity and impurity, of spite and rage, of misery and torment. It depriveth each man of all hope from providence, all comfort and support in affliction, of all satisfaction in conscience, of all the good things which faith doth yield.

The

The consideration of which numberless and unspeakable mischiefs hath engaged Statesmen in every Common-wealth to support some kind of faith, as needful to the maintenance of publick order, of traffick, of peace among men.

It would suffice to persuade an Infidel, that hath a scrap of wit (for his own interest, safety and pleasure) to cherish faith in others, and with all men beside himself endued with it.

It in reason obligeth all men to detest Atheistical supplanters of faith, as desperate enemies to mankind, enemies to government, destructive of common society; especially considering that of all religions that ever were, or can be, the Christian doth most conduce to the benefit of publick society; injoining all virtues useful to preserve it in a quiet and flourishing state, teaching Loyalty under pain of damnation.

I pass by, that *without faith no man can please God*; that Infidelity doth expose men to his wrath, and severest vengeance; that it depriveth of all joy and happiness; seeing Infidels will not grant such effects to follow their sin, but will reject the supposition of them as precarious and fictitious. Heb. 11. 6.

To conclude therefore the point, it is from what we have said sufficiently manifest, that Infidelity is a very sinful distemper, as being in its nature so bad; being the daughter of so bad causes, the sister of so bad adjuncts, the mother of so bad effects.

But this you will say is an improper subject: for is there any such thing as Infidelity in *Christendom*? are we not all Christians, all believers, all baptized into the faith, and professors of it? do we not every day repeat the *Creed*, or at least say *Amen* thereto? do we not partake of the holy Mysteries sealing this profession? what do you take us for? for *Pagans*? this is a subject to be treated of in *Turkey*, or in *partibus infidelium*. This may be said; but if we consider better, we shall find ground more than enough for such discourse; and that Infidelity hath a larger territory than we suppose: for (to pass over the swarms of Atheistical apostates, which so openly abound, denying or questioning our Religion) many Infidels do lurk under the mask of Christian profession. It is not the name of Christian, or the badges of our Religion, that make a Christian; more than a Cowle doth make a Monk, or the Beard a Philosopher. There may be a Creed in the mouth, where there is no faith in the heart, and a Cross impressed on the forehead of an Infidel; *With the heart man believeth to righteousness*: Rom. 10. 8. *Shew me thy faith by thy works*, faith St. James: if no works be shewed, no faith is to be granted, as where no fruit, there no root, or a dead root, which in effect and moral esteem is none at all. Jam. 2. 18.

Is he not an Infidel, who denieth God? such a *renegado* is every one that liveth profanely, as St. Paul telleth us. And have we not many such *renegado's*? Tit. 1. 16. if not, what meaneth that monstrous dissoluteness of life, that horrid profaneness of discourse, that strange neglect of God's service, a desolation of God's law? where such luxury, such lewdness, such avarice, such uncharitableness, such universal carnality doth reign, can faith be there? can a man believe there is a God, and so affront him? can he believe that Christ reigneth in heaven, and so despise his laws? can a man believe a judgment to come, and so little regard his life, a heaven and so little seek it, a hell and so little shun it?—Faith therefore is not so rife, Infidelity is more common than we may take it to be: Every sin hath a spice of it, some sins smell rankly of it.

To it are attributed all the rebellions of the *Israelites*, which are the types of all Christian professors, who seem travellers in this earthly wilderness toward the heavenly *Canaan*; and to it all the enormities of sin and overflowings of iniquity may be ascribed.

I should proceed to urge the Precept, that we *take heed thereof*; but the time will not allow me to do it: I shall only suggest to your Meditation the heads of things.

It is Infidelity, that maketh men covetous, uncharitable, discontent, pusillanimous, impatient.

Because men believe not providence, therefore they do so greedily scrape, and hoard.

They do not believe any reward for charity, therefore they will part with nothing.

They do not hope for succour from God, therefore are they discontent, and impatient.

They have nothing to raise their spirits, therefore are they abject.

Infidelity did cause the Devils Apostasie.

Infidelity did banish Man from Paradise (trusting to the Devil, and distrust-
ing God's word.)

Infidelity (disregarding the warnings and threats of God) did bring the deluge
on the World.

Heb. 3. 19.
—4. 6, &c.

Infidelity did keep the *Israelites* from entering into *Canaan*, the type of Heaven;
as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* doth insist.

Infidelity indeed is the root of all sin; for did men heartily believe the promi-
ses to obedience, and the threats to disobedience, they could hardly be so unrea-
sonable as to forfeit the one, or incur the other: did they believe that the Om-
nipotent, All-wise, Most just and severe God did command and require such a
practice, they could hardly dare to omit or transgress.

Let it therefore suffice to have declared the evil of Infidelity, which alone is
sufficient inducement to avoid it.

F

I Believe, &c.

SERMON II.

OF THE

Vertue and Reasonableness

OF

FAITH.

II PET. I. 1.

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us.

THE Holy Scripture recommendeth Faith (that is, a hearty and firm persuasion concerning the principal doctrines of our Religion, from divine revelation taught by our Lord and his Apostles) as a most precious, and honourable practice; as a vertue of the first magnitude, very commendable in it self, † very acceptable to God, very beneficial to us; having † most excellent fruits growing from it, most noble privileges annexed to it, † most ample rewards assigned for it. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Heb. 11. 6. John 16. 27.

It is in a special manner commanded, and obedience to that command is reckoned a prime instance of piety: *This is his commandment, that we should believe; this is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom he hath sent.* 1 John 3. 23. John 6. 29.

It is the root of our spiritual life; for *He that cometh to God must believe;* and, *add to your faith vertue,* faith St. Peter, supposing faith to precede other vertues. Heb. 11. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 5.

It is the principal conduit of divine grace: for

By it we are regenerated, and become the Sons of God; *Ye all (faith St. Paul) are the Sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* Gal. 3. 26. John 1. 12. 1 John 2. 24. 2 John 9. Eph. 3. 17.

By it we abide in God, and do possess him, faith St. John.

By it Christ dwelleth in us, faith St. Paul.

By it we obtain God's Spirit: *Did ye (faith St. Paul) receive the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Gal. 3. 2, 14. Eph. 1. 13. Acts 2. 38. 5. 32. John 7. 38.

By it we are justified, or acquitted from guilt, and condemnation for sin: for, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.* Rom. 3. 25. 5. 1. 10. 10. Acts 26. 18. 10. 43.

By it our hearts are purged (faith St. Paul) our souls are purified, faith St. Peter. Acts 15. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 22.

By it we are freed from the dominion of sin; according to that of our Saviour; *If ye abide in my word, — ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.* John 8. 31.

It procureth freedom of access to God — *we have (faith St. Paul) boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.* Eph. 3. 12. Heb. 10. 22. Eph. 6. 16.

It

1 Pet. 5. 9. It is the *shield*, whereby we *resist* temptations; and the weapon, whereby
 1 John 5. 5. we *overcome the world*.

1 Tim. 1. 19. In fine, it is that, which being *retained in a good conscience*, and maintained
 3. 9. 1. 5:

Eph. 2. 8. Rom. 10. 10. Rom. 8. 24.
 1. 16. Heb. 10. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 9. Luke
 8. 12. Acts 16. 30, 31. 2 The. 2. 10.

Πίστις — ἡ διασώζουσα, καὶ τὴν
 βασιλείαν νομιζόντες ἑλλώμεν, Clem.
 Str. 2. (p. 265.)

Pagani nobis objicere solent, quod re-
 ligio nostra, quia quasi rationibus desti-
 tit, in sola credendi persuasione con-
 stat. Ruff. in Symb.

Ἀδίκημα καὶ δικαιοπραγία αἰεταί
 τὸ ἐκείνου καὶ ἀκρίβεια, Arist. Eth. 5.
 8. 3. 1.

by vertuous practice, doth keep us in a state of salvation,
 and will assuredly convey us into eternal life and felicity;
 for, *by grace we are saved, through faith*.

That Faith should be thus highly dignified, hath always
 appeared strange to the Adversaries of our Religion; and
 hath suggested to them matter of obloquy against it; they
 could not apprehend why we should be commanded, or
 how we can be obliged to believe; as if it were an arbitra-
 ry thing, depending on our free choice, and not rather did
 naturally follow the representation of objects to our mind:
 they would not allow, that an act of our understanding,
 hardly voluntary, as being extorted by force of arguments,
 should deserve such reputation, and such recompences; for

if (argued they) a doctrine be propounded with evident and cogent reason,
 what virtue is there in believing it, seeing a man in that case cannot avoid
 believing it, is therein merely passive, and by irresistible force subdued? If it
 be propounded without such reason, what fault can it be to refuse assent, or to
 suspend his opinion about it? can a wise man then do otherwise? is it not in
 such a case simplicity, or fond credulity to yield assent; yea is it not deceit or
 hypocrisy to pretend the doing so? may not justly then all the blame be char-
 ged rather on the incredibility of the doctrine, or the infirmity of reasons en-
 forcing it, than on the incredulity of the person, who doth not admit it?
 whence no Philosophers ever did impose such a Precept, or did assign to Faith
 a place among the Vertues.

To clear this matter, and to vindicate our Religion from such misprisions;
 and that we may be engaged to prize and cherish it, I shall endeavour to de-
 clare, that Christian Faith doth worthily deserve all the commendations, and
 the advantages granted thereto; this I shall do by considering its nature and
 ingredients, its rise and causes, its efficacy and consequences.

1. As to its Nature; it doth involve knowledge, knowledge of most worthy
 and important truths, knowledge peculiar and not otherwise attainable,
 knowledge in way of great evidence and assurance.

1. Truth is the natural food of our soul, toward which it
 hath a greedy appetite, which it tasteth with delicious com-
 placency, which being taken in and digested by it doth ren-
 der it lusty, plump and active: truth is the special ornament

of our mind, decking it with a graceful and pleasant lustre; truth is the proper
 wealth of reason, whereof having acquired a good stock, it appeareth rich, prof-

perous, and mighty: what light is without, that is truth within, shining on our
 inward world, illustrating, quickning, and comforting all things there, exci-

ting all our faculties to action, and guiding them in it. All knowledge there-
 fore, which is the possession of truth, is much esteemed; even that, which re-
 specteth objects mean, and little concerning us (such as humane Sciences are
 conversant about; natural appearances, historical events, the properties, pro-
 portions and powers of figure, of motion, of corporeal force) doth bear a good
 price, as perfective of rational nature, enriching, adorning, invigorating our
 mind; whence Aristotle doubteth not upon all those habitual endowments,

which so accomplish our understanding, to bestow the name of Vertues; that
 with him being the *Vertue of each thing, which any-wise perfecteth it, and dis-*
poseth it for action suitable to its nature. And if ignorance, error, doubt are
 defects, deformities, infirmities of our soul, then the knowledge, which remo-
 veth them, doth imply the perfection, beauty and vigour thereof. Faith there-
 fore as implying knowledge is valuable.

2. But it is much more so, in regard to the quality of its objects, which are
 the most worthy that can be, and most useful for us to know: the knowledge
 whereof doth indeed advance our soul into a better state, doth ennoble, enrich
 and imbellish our nature; doth raise us to a nearer resemblance with God, and
 participation of his wisdom; doth infuse purest delight, and satisfaction into
 our

πιστις ἡ εἰς
 θεὸν γινώσκου-
 σα ὅσα ἀποκρυ-
 φτα. Chryl.
 T. 5. Or. 55.

Ἀλήθεια δὲ πάντων μὲν ἀγαθῶν θε-
 οῦς ἡγείται, πάντων δ' ἀνθρώπων. Plat.
 de Leg. (p. 841.) de Rep. 6. (p. 675.)

Psal. 119. 142.
 151.
 Job. 1. 7. 3. 19.
 Psal. 119. 105.

Πᾶσα ἀρετὴ
 ἐν ᾧ ἀρετὴ,
 αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐν ᾧ
 ἔχον ἀποτελεῖ,
 καὶ τὸ ἔργον
 αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀπο-
 δίδωσι, Arist.
 Eth. 2. 6.

our hearts: doth qualifie and direct us unto practice, most conducive to our welfare; 'tis a knowledge, *enlightning the eyes, converting the soul, rejoicing the heart; sweeter than honey, and the honey-comb; more precious than rubies; which giveth to our Head an ornament of grace, and a crown of glory.* For,

Thereby we understand the Nature, or the principal attributes of God, of whom only the Christian doctrine doth afford a completely true and worthy character, directive of our esteem, our worship, our obedience, our imitation of him; whereby our demeanour toward him may become him, and please him.

By it we are fully acquainted with the will and intentions of God, relating both to our duty and our recompence; what he requireth from us, and what he designeth for us; upon what terms he will proceed with us in way of grace, of mercy, of justice.

By it we are informed concerning our selves, what our frame is, whence our original, to what ends we are designed, wherein our felicity doth consist, and how it is attainable.

It enableth us rightly to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong; what is worthy of us, and pleasing to God, what misbecoming us and offensive to him; both absolutely and comparatively, according to the degrees of each case respectively.

It prescribeth us an exact rule of life, comprizing all our duties toward God, our neighbour, our selves; to observe which will be most decent, and exceedingly profitable to us.

It teacheth us from what principles, and upon what grounds we should act, that our practice should be truly good, and laudable.

It proposeth the most valid inducements to vertue, tendring the favour of God and eternal blifs in reward thereof, menacing divine wrath, and endless woe, upon its neglect.

It discovereth the special aids dispensed to us for the support of our weakness against all temptations and discouragements incident to us through the course of our life.

The knowledge of these things is plainly the top of all knowledge, whereof we are capable; not consisting in barren notion, not gratifying idle curiosity, not serving trivial purposes, but really bettering our souls, producing most goodly and wholesome fruits, tending to ends most noble and worthy, this indeed is the highest Philosophy; the true culture, and medicine of our soul; the true guide of life, and mistress of action; the mother of all virtues; the best invention of God, and rarest gift of heaven to men; for these commendations, by *Pagan* Sages ascribed to their Philosophy, do in truth solely belong to that knowledge, which by faith we do possess: their Philosophy could not reach such truths; it could not so much as aim at some of them; it did but weakly attempt at any: It did indeed pretend to the knowledge of divine and humane things (this being its definition, current among them) but it had no competent means of attaining either in any considerable measure; for divine things (the

nature of him, who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto; the intentions of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his will; the ways of him, which are more discovered from our ways, than heaven from Earth; the depths of God, which none but his own spirit can search out or discover) do lie beyond the sphere of natural light, and inquisition of our reason: and as for humane things, the chief of them have such a connexion with divine things, that who were ignorant of the one, could no wise descry the other; wherefore those candidates of knowledge, notwithstanding their lofty pretences, were fain to rest in a low form, employing their studies on inferiour things, the obscurity of nature, the subtilty of discourse, and moral precepts of life; such precepts, as their glimmering light, and common experience did suggest; for even in points of common morality and prudence humane wit can but fumble, as by the great clashing and jangling about them, is very notorious.

Cultura animi, Cic. Tusc. 1. Medicina animi, Tusc. 3. O vite Philosophia dux, &c. Tusc. 5. de Leg. 1. de Fin. 3. Nec ullum arbitror, ut apud Platonem est, majus aut melius à Diis datum munus homini. Acad. 1. Tusc. 1.

Omnis optimarum rerum cognitio, atq; in iis exercitatio Philosophia nominatur. de Orat. 3.

Οὐκ ἐχέουσιν διδάσκαλοι πλεῖστοὶ λέγοντες ἀνθρώποι κατὰ ἀνθρώποι, &c. Cl. Alex. Str. 6. (p. 501.)

Tim. 6. 16. Eph. 1. 11. Isa. 55. 9. 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11.

Philosophia in tres partes distributa est, in naturæ obscuritatem, in dissendi subtilitatem, in vitam atque mores. Cic. de Orat. 1.

3. Faith also hath this excellent advantage, that it endueth us with such knowledge in a very clear and sure way, comparable to that whereby the Theorems of any Science are known; it not being grounded on any slippery deduction of reason, nor on slender conjectures of fancy, nor on musty traditions, or popular rumours; but upon the infallible testimony of God, conveyed unto us by powerful evidence, striking all capacities, apt with equal influence to enlighten the simple, and to convince the wise. For want of this all humane wisdom was so blind and lame; so various, so uncertain; nothing but confusion, unsettlement, and dissatisfaction arising from mere ratiocination; which being destitute of light and aid from heaven, doth ever grope in the dark, doth rove after shadows of truth, is bewildred in mazes of intricacy, wherein things lie involved; whence all Philosophy did consist in faint guesses, plausible discourses, and endless disputes about matters of highest consequence, such as the original of the world, the administration of humane things, the nature and subsistence of our soul, the way to happiness; none being able about such points to conclude with resolution, or to assert with confidence; so that in effect all the Philosophers might be ranged under one great Sect of *Scepticks* or *seekers*, the most advised, and best disposed among them in result of their most diligent speculations, appearing very doubtful. *

Acts 17. 27.
30.

Ο μὴ ἐκ πί-
στεως βοηθού-
μεν, ἀλλ'
οἰκοδομεῖν ἐπὶ
λόγον ἐσχη-
μένον, ταῖς
ἀνθρώπιναις
ἐκδοκαῖς
ὡς τὴν κα-
τάληψιν τῆς
ἀληθείας
δαρῶν, ἵνα
ἐκείνην ὁ
πολλὸν τῆς α-
ληθείας ἐκπύσῃ.

Baf. in II. 15. "Ολως ὃ ἡ ἀνδρ. πίστεως ἐπὶ τὸ λαλεῖν ἐρχομένη ψυχὴ διακινῆς ληθῆσαι. Ibid.

Hanc ego persebam Philosophiam semper judicavi, quia de maximis questionibus copiose posset, ornateq; dicere. Cic. Tusc. 5.

Vid. in M. Ant. Comm. p. 143. Chryl. in Joh. Or. 63.

* Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔγω ποιεῖ σκοτίζον ὡς ἀνθρώπων λογισμὸς καὶ τῆς πάσης φθαρσίμου, καὶ μὴ ἀνεχόμενον παύσεσθαι ἀνωθεν, &c. Chryl. in Joh. Or. 25.

1 Pet. 1. 19.

But we have (as St. Peter saith) *βεβαιότερον λόγον, a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to give heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, guiding*

Heb. 6. 19.

Τὴν ψυχὴν
τὴν ἡμετέ-
ραν σεσαλευ-
μένην, καὶ τε-
ταραμένην
καὶ τῆς
λογισμῶν ἀδυνατίας, &c. Chryl. Tom. 5. Orat. 55.

us in the obscurities and uncertainties of life; we have *a hope, as an anchor of the soul both sure and stable*; which stayeth and setteth our mind, being tost with winds and waves of uncertain cogitations, suggested by different appearances of things.

Τίς ἐκ αὐτῶν μὴ οἶδεν τὴν τῆς
Χεῖρὸς δύναμιν, ἢ τὴν ἀγασμῶν
καὶ ἰδιότητος ἧς μέγα ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ κομ-
μαζοῦσιν τοσούτω σοφώτερος ἀπέδει-
ξεν, ἢ οὗ μὴ μικρὸν παιδίον τὸς
ἐμφανῶς ἀνδρας ὑπερχούσας ὅσον
ἰδὼν, &c. Chryl. ἀνδρ. 19.

Hence (as St. Chrysostome is wont to insist) by virtue of faith, rustick and mechanick Idiots do in true knowledge surpass the most refined wits, and Children prove wiser than old Philosophers; an Idiot can tell us that, which a learned Infidel doth not know; a Child can assure us that, wherein a deep Philosopher is not resolved: for ask a Boor, ask a boy educated in our religion, who made him, he will tell you,

God Almighty; which is more than *Aristotle* or *Democritus* would have told: demand of him why he was made, he will answer you, to serve and glorify his Maker; and hardly would *Pythagoras* or *Plato* have reply'd so wisely; examine him concerning his soul, he will averr, that it is immortal, that it shall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it shall abide in a state of bliss or misery everlasting; about which points neither *Socrates* nor *Seneca* could assure any thing: enquire of him how things are upheld, how governed and ordered, he presently will reply, by the powerful hand and wise providence of God; whereas among Philosophers, one would ascribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune; one to blind influences of Stars, another to a confused jumble of Atoms: pose him about the main points of morality and duty, and he will in few words better inform you than *Cicero*, or *Epictetus*, or *Aristotle*, or *Plutarch*, in their large tracts and voluminous discourses about matters of that nature.

Chryl. T. 6.
Or. 61. (pag.
633.)

Prov. 1. 4. Pl.

19. 7. Pl. 119.

9. 100, 130.

John 12. 46.

8. 12.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

16, 17.

So real a property it is of God's law to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion; so true it is, that our Lord affirmeth of himself, *I came a light into the world, that he who believeth in me, may not abide in darkness*: So justly doth St. Paul affirm concerning divine revelation, that it is able to make a man wise to salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus; being profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. This is

II. 35. 8.

that high-way of holiness, of which the Prophet saith, *the way-faring men, though*

though fools, shall not err therein. Thus is faith in its nature honourable:

II. It hath also divers ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth imply, rendring it commendable and acceptable to God. As,

1. Faith implieth a good use of reason. This is that which commendeth any virtue, that a man acting after it, doth act wisely, in conformity to the frame and design of his nature, or like a rational creature; using his best faculties in the best manner, and in their proper operations towards the end intended by the all-wise Creatour: this is that, upon which all dispensation of justice is founded, a man being accountable for the use of his reason, so as to deserve reward for the right management, and punishment for the misuse thereof; this is that consequently, whereon God so often declareth himself to ground his judgment; so that in effect he will justify men for being wise, and condemn them as guilty of folly; whence in the holy Style, wisdom, and virtue or piety, are terms equivalent; and a fool doth signify the same with a vicious, or impious person. And if ever a man deserveth commendation for well using his reason, it is then, when upon mature deliberation he doth embrace the Christian doctrine; for so doing is a most rational act, arguing the person to be sagacious, considerate and judicious; one, who doth carefully enquire into things, doth seriously weigh the case, doth judge soundly about it.

It was a foul aspersion cast upon our Religion by its ancient opposers, that it did require *πίστις ἢ λόγος τίςιν*, a mere belief, void of reason; challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof. This suggestion, if true, were, I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man indeed justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms; but it is really a gross calumny; such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our Religion; being repugnant to the nature and tenour thereof; being prejudicial to its interest and design; being contrary to its use and practice. Never any Religion was indeed so little liable to the censure of obtruding it self on mens credulity, none ever so freely exposed it self to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences; yea provoked them for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage) to a fair, discreet, careful examination thereof. Other Religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of Ancestors, custom and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments extrinsecal, and of small validity in any case) declining all other test and verdict of reason: But our Religion confideth in it self, and the pure merit of its cause; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth; referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person.

It indeed ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and chusing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, until after a competent time, and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other; God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man of its truth, who is not affectedly blind and stupid, or wantonly slothful and careless, or forwardly stiff and obstinate.

What indeed better arguments (considering the nature of the objects, which faith respecteth, being things spiritual and invisible; considering also the capacities of persons concerned, being all sorts of people, wise and simple, learned and rude) could we have, or could we need, than the conspicuous excellency and usefulness of the doctrine, approving it self to the mind, and confirming it self by palpable experience of most happy fruits, springing from a practice conformable

*Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον. Ο-
rig. in Cell. (p. 84.)*

*Πίστευσον, εἰ σκεδῆσαι θέλεις, ἢ ἀ-
πίστι. Id. in Cell. 6. (p. 282.)*

*Ὁ ταῦτα πισδύσας ἔχ' ἀπλῶς ἐδὲ
ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ κείνοι καὶ πληροφoρία
χάρισμα ἀληθινὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ. Const. A-
post. 8. 1.*

*Δέχεσθε, φέρων, ἀπλῶς τὰ λεγόμε-
να, καὶ μὴ εἰς ἐξέταξιν τι πρίν
ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ τι ἀπρεπές: καὶ τίςιν ὁνο-
μάζει τινὲς ἀσσανίζον ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀσά-
τοις καὶ ἀναποδείκτοις ἐπὶ ἐλαβῶν συγ-
κατάδεικτον. Athan. Tom. 2. p. 325.
de Arianis.*

*Εὐαγγέλιον
ἐξέτασι. Ο-
rig.*

LaB. 2. 6.

LaB. 2. 7.

1 Pet. 1. 10. formable thereto? than its exact correspondence to manifold ancient presignifications and predictions concerning it; than special attestations of God thereto, not only by audible voices, and visible apparitions from heaven, but also by innumerable miraculous works; than the concurrence of divine providence in strange methods to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the blessings and consolations attending a faithful observance of it? What subtilty of discourse, what charm of eloquence could serve to evince and impress the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands and promises of God; concerning the immortal subsistence of our soul, the future judgment, the everlasting rewards hereafter, with such evidence and such force, to the common and vulgar reason, or

John 7. 17. Acts 5. 32.

Τὴ ἀναγκαστικὴν εἰς συγκάλειψιν, ἀπὸ μὲν πειρασμῶν πολλῶν καὶ τῶ συμπίπτουσα ἀλλήλων ἐαυτοῖς ἐρεσκόμενα, ἢ δαίμων τοσούτων ἐργῶν ἐρεσκόμενα, πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπου δύναμιν ὑπερβαίνον. Bas. in Pf. 115.

indeed to any reason of man, as do these plain arguments, needing no reach of wit, or depth of judgment, to found their meaning, or feel their strength?

But if any man be too wise to be pleased with such downright and easy ways of conviction, reason it self, well followed, would lead him hither, and serve to produce faith in him: for that there is a God, reason from observation of appearances in nature and providence, will collect; that goodness is one of his principal attributes, reason from the same grounds will infer; that God hath an especial regard to men, will thence also become notorious; that consequently God will vouchsafe his guidance to men in their way toward happiness, will appear reasonable to conceive; that God hath not done this in any other way, reason comparing and weighing things, will easily discern; that Christian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reason soon will admit: so hath reason led us to the door of faith, and being arrived thither, will (if our will be not averse) easily find entrance.

John 3. 21.
1 Pet. 2. 9.
Acts 16. 18.

Hence God doth not only allow, but enjoin us to use our best reason in judging of this doctrine, whether it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance: he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to shut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it; but chargeth us to go into the clearest light, to open our eyes wide, to view it thoroughly with our best senses, and sharpest attention, before we do yield our consent and approbation to it: His precepts are, that we *examine all things, and hold fast that which is good*; that we *believe not every spirit* (or revelation pretended) *but try the Spirits, whether they be of God*; that we stand on our guard, and *take heed that no man deceive us*; that we be not *fools, nor children in understanding*; but *wise, and perfect men*; that we *compare things different, and try what is well pleasing to God*; that we be *always ready with meekness and modesty to render unto every man demanding it an account of the hope in us*.

Matt. 24. 4. Eph. 5. 6.
Eph. 5. 15, 17. 1 Cor. 14. 20.
Eph. 5. 10. Rom. 12. 2.
1 Cor. 10. 15. Rom. 1. 18.
Phil. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

He therefore doth expostulate with men for their dulness, their incogitancy, their sluggishness, their folly, as the causes of their unbelief; declaring, that in respect to such defaults, wilfully incurred, he will proceed to condemn it: He (saith our Lord) *that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*: and, *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: If I had not come and spoken unto them—If I had not done among them the works, which no other man did, they had not had sin*: Our Lord we see did not urge his bare authority, or exact a faith without ground; but he claimeth it as due upon two most rational accounts, his convincing discourses, and his unparallel'd works; which from any well advised and well disposed person could not but win belief, that he was a teacher sent from God.

John 7. 46.
—3. 2.

Indeed, if we seriously do weigh the case, we shall find, that to require faith without reason, is to demand an impossibility; for faith is an effect of persuasion, and persuasion is nothing else but the application of some reason to the mind, apt to draw forth its assent: no man therefore can believe he knoweth not what or why; he that truly believeth, must apprehend the proposition, and he must discern its connexion with some principle of truth, which as more notorious to him he before doth admit; otherwise he doth only pretend to believe, out of some design, or from affection to some party; his faith is not so much really faith, as hypocrisy, craft, fondness, or faction.

God

God therefore neither doth nor can enjoin us faith without reason; but therefore doth require it, as matter of duty, from us, because he hath furnished sufficient reason to persuade us: And having made his doctrine credible (*a faithful* 1 Tim. 1. 15. *or credible*) word, and worthy of all acceptance) having given us reason chiefly to be employed in such matters, as he justly may claim our assent, so he will take well our ready surrendry of it to him, as an act of reason and wisdom becoming us.

To yield unto reason fairly proposed and proved, is in any case a laudable quality, signifying that a man hath his reason to purpose, that he is guided and governed thereby, not by humour or fancy; qualifying him for conversation and business, for which nothing rendreth a man more unfit than humorous incredulity, or obstinacy against reason: It is especially commendable in these cases, concerning our better part, and final state, arguing a man to be sober and advised, affording regard to things best deserving it, employing his consideration in due place, being faithful and just to himself, in attending to his main concerns.

2. Faith implieth a compliance with the providence and grace of God; with his providence framing the oeconomy of things to be believed, discovering it to the world by special revelation, furnishing motives apt to work faith, dispensing opportunities of knowledge leading thereto; with his grace operating in our souls, by illustration of our minds to discern, attraction of our wills to embrace, inclination of our affections to relish and like the heavenly truths exhibited to us.

There is no man to whom means are not administered sufficient to produce in him that measure of faith, which is requisite toward the good management of his life, and his rendring an account for it at God's tribunal; there is no man also, to whom such means are afforded, whom the grace of God (*who desireth that* 1 Tim. 2. 4. *all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*) doth not in some degree excite to the due improvement of them, but in effect the case is varied, because some men do embrace those means, and comply with that grace, while others do reject, or neglect them.

Our Lord saith, that *every one, who hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, doth come unto him*; but some there are, to whom the Father speaketh, yet they *stop their ears, and refuse to hear*; some do hear in a sort, but do not learn, ill prejudices or depraved affections barring instruction from their mind; being like those of whom the Apostle saith, *the word heard did not profit them, being not mingled with faith in those which heard it*.

John 6. 45.

Job 33. 16. Zech. 7. 11. Ezek. 3. 11. 2 Tim. 4. 4. Acts 7. 57. Job 33. 14. 21. 14. Heb. 3. 7, 15.

Heb. 4. 2.

No man (saith our Lord again) *can come unto me, except the Father draw him*; but this attraction is not compulsory, we may hold back; we may withstand it, and not follow.

John 6. 44. John 5. 40. Mat 22. 3. Luke 13. 34.

Faith (saith St. Paul) *is a gift of God, and a favour granted to us* *ἐν χάριτι* Eph. 2. 8. *ἐξ ἰσχυρῆς* Phil. 1. 29. *τοῦ Θεοῦ* (Eph. 1. 17, 18.) *but also to suffer for him*; and to you (saith our Lord) *it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven*: but this gift is not always accepted, this favour is not always entertained; God doth not so obtrude it on us, but that we may reject or decline it.

Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29. (Eph. 1. 17, 18.) Mat. 13. 11.

Faith is *a fruit of God's spirit*; but such as will not grow in a bad soil, not purged from weeds of corrupt prejudice, of vicious affection, of worldly care; which will not thrive without good care and culture.

Gal. 5. 22. Matt. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 12. 3, 9. 1 John 2. 20. 4. 2

God inviteth us to believe by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his Ministers; he declareth abundant reason to persuade us; he representeth to our minds the beauty of Christian truth and vertue; he speaketh from without unto us by manifold arguments, able, if we are not very stupid, to convince us; he speaketh within by strong impressions on our consciences, apt, if we are not very stubborn, to subdue us: *Behold, saith he, I stand at the door, and knock*; *if any man will hear my voice, and will open the door, I will come in unto him*. Such is the case, God standeth at the door of our heart by the ministry of his word,

2 Cor. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 20.

Apoc. 3. 20.

he knocketh at it by the impulse of his grace; but to hear is the work of our vigilance, to open is an act of our voluntary compliance.

2 Cor. 4. 6.
Eph. 1. 17, 18.

God (saith St. Paul) who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; God shineth upon us by revelation of his truth, God shineth into us by illumination of his spirit; the which through the ear doth convey the light of truth unto the heart; but we may by wilful obstruction exclude that light, shutting the windows of our heart against it; we may there quench it by foul affections, we may smother it in fogs of evil prejudice; we may dissipate it by troublesome cares; we may, by affected blindness, or drowsie negligence render it indiscernible, or ineffectual to us; like those, of whom the Apostle there saith, that the God of this world had blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2 Cor. 3. 14.
ἐπαρώσθη τὰ νοήματα.
2 Cor. 4. 4.

Acts 13. 46.

Acts 7. 51.

Matt. 13. 4.

&c.

Joh. 3. 20. 1. 5.

Joh. 24. 13.

Luke 7. 30.

Matt. 23. 37.

A man may ἀπαρτίσαι τὸ λόγον, thrust away the word, as it is said of the Jews; he may, as others of the same stamp did, resist the spirit; he may (as those worldlings in the Gospel) let the seed fall beside him, or not fall deep into him, or fall into thorns, which may choke it; he may hate the light, and therefore not come unto it; or rebel against it, as those did in Job; he may, as the Pharisees did, defeat the counsels, and cross the desires of God.

And as to deal thus with God's word and providence, thus to treat his spirit and grace is heinously criminal, so to use them well is very acceptable to God's goodness; if we yield due regard to his providence, and an obsequious ear to his word; if we cheerfully do accept his gifts, and close with his overtures of mercy; if we concur with his motions and farther his gracious designs, he will take it kindly of us; as therein acting becomingly toward him, and gratifying him in that, wherein he most delighteth, which is the procurement of our good.

3. Faith doth imply good opinion of God, and good actions toward him.

Τὸ φυσικὸν
φίλτρον περὶ
τὴν κτίσιν αἰσῶ.
Orig.

God our parent hath stamped on our nature some lineaments of himself, whereby we resemble him; he hath implanted in our soul some roots of piety toward him, into our frame he hath inserted some propensions to acknowledge him, and to affect him; the which are excited and improved by observing the manifest footsteps of divine power, wisdom and goodness, which occur in the works of nature and providence; to preserve and cherish these is very commendable; a man thereby keeping the pretious reliques of the divine image from utter defacement, retaining somewhat of his primitive worth and integrity; declaring that by ill usage he hath not quite shattered or spoiled his best faculties and inclinations.

Now that he who believeth hath thus managed himself, so as to have preserved in his soul those seeds of piety, apt to conspire with the influences of grace drawing to belief, doth appear from hence, that faith doth include an assent to divers points, so thwarting our carnal sense and gust, that without a good esteem of God, and good affection toward him, we hardly could admit them; the carnal mind (or brutish part within us) being, as St. Paul saith, enmity to God, and incapable of submission to his law; the sensual man being not able to receive the things of God, for they are foolishness to him; to balance which repugnance and indisposition, there must be some good notions and good affections in the mind, disposing it to comply with the revelation of truth, and operation of grace.

Rom. 8. 7.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

There can hardly be any greater instance of respect and love toward any person, than a ready yielding of assent to his words, when he doth aver things to our conceit absurd or incredible; than resting on his promise, when he seemeth to offer things impossible, or strangely difficult; than imbracing his advice, when he recommendeth things very cross to our interest, humour and pleasure; whence Abraham's faith (expressed in hoping for a Son in his decrepit age, and in offering up that Son, who was so dear to him, who was the heir of promise, the prop of his family and hope) is so magnified, as an argument of exceeding respect and affection toward God; Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God; it was a great evidence of his friendship, that against hope he believed in hope, being fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able to perform; and therefore

James 2. 23.

Rom. 4. 18.

Heb. 11. 19.

11.

fore

fore it was imputed to him for righteousness; or accepted by God, as a signal act of goodness, whereby he did testify his immovable opinion concerning the power, fidelity and benignity of God, together with answerable good-will toward him.

And many things doth the Christian doctrine propose, apt to try such a friendship; many a *hard saying* doth it assert, which a profane mind can hardly swallow, or digest; there is indeed scarce any Article of faith, at which we shall not boggle; any matter of duty, which we shall not start at; any promise of God, whereat we shall not stagger, if we be not seasoned with favourable apprehensions and inclinations toward him, who recommendeth them to us, as endued with those attributes, which secure their credibility.

That God Almighty should erect this stately fabrick of heaven and earth, decked with so rich and goodly furniture, with especial regard to Man, so puny and mean a creature, whom he foresaw so ready to offend and wrong him; that upon his foul misdemeanour God should not withdraw his gracious protection and care from him, but thence should take occasion of designing and capacitating him for a state far more happy than that whence he had lapsed, making his punishment a benefit, and his deserved death a gate of immortality; that for the redemption of him (continuing in Apostasy, and rebellious enmity) God should please to send down out of his bosom, from the height of glory and blessedness, his own dearest Son, to partake the baseness and infirmity of our flesh, to endure the inconveniences and troubles incident to our condition, to undergo a most painful and ignominious death for the expiation of our offences; these are mysteries, to which we should not easily give credence, did we not conceive God immensely good and gracious.

That God could not pitch on more compendious and commodious ways of expressing his goodness and mercy, we hardly should admit, if we did not take him to be transcendently wise, far beyond our reach, and comprehension.

Eph. 3. 8. ἀ-
νεξήκωτος
πλῆθος τῆ
κρίσεως.

That Jesus, a man in appearance like to our selves, of mean parentage, of poor estate, who lived as a beggar and a vagrant, who died as a malefactor and a slave, in semblance forlorn to God and man, should be the Lord of life and glory, the general author of salvation, the Judge of all men, the King of all the world, is a point, which cannot but appear very strange, very scandalous to minds not imbued with special reverence of the divine power and wisdom.

That God, who is so perfectly holy, so exactly just, so extremely displeased with iniquity, should yet bear so patiently, and so easily pardon enormous transgressions against himself; that he should accept so mean services, and to so slight performances should dispense so precious rewards, who would believe, that is not possessed with conceptions of his admirable clemency and bounty?

That God one day will raise the dead, recollecting our scattered dust, and rearing our dissolved frame, we should not easily grant, had we not a strong opinion of God's power, and that *nothing is too hard for him* to accomplish.

That to deny our selves in all ways, to *hate our own souls*, to take up a cross, to forsake kindred and friends, to quit houses and lands, to *renounce all that we have*, to reject the profits, the honours, the delights of the world, to cut off our right hands, to pluck out our right eyes, to mortify our members, and crucify our flesh, to be dead to the world, to expose our lives unto greatest dangers, yea to sacrifice them unto certain loss, are often things very good, most advisable and eligible, how could we be ever induced to conceive, if we did not take God to be most wise, who hath prescribed such duties, most faithful, who hath engaged to satisfy us for the discharge of them, most able fully to requite us for the pains and damages, which we sustain in such practice?

That the methods of providence should be so intricate and unaccountable, that the passage to happiness should be so rough, and that to misery so smooth; that He who disposeth all things, should to those whom he most liketh and loveth dispense temptations, crosses, disgraces, all kinds of hardship and sorrow; permitting those whom he disapproveth and detesteth, to live without interruption in quiet, splendour and jollity; would stumble one, who hath not entertained a general assurance concerning the wisdom and equity of God.

Faith therefore, in most of its chief parts, doth imply him that owneth it, to be well conceited, and well affected toward his Maker; thereby avowing his most glorious perfections, the which do assure the truth of his word and doctrine; *John 3. 3.* *He (saith our Lord) that hath received my testimony, hath set his seal, that God is true;* that is, most evidently he doth signify his opinion of God's veracity and fidelity, together with the divine perfections requisite to make them good: for be (saith the believer in his mind) the proposition never so uncouth to my apprehension, yet God is true who affirmeth it; be the duty never so harsh to my sense, yet God is wise and good who appointeth it; be the promise never so unlikely in appearance to find effect, yet God is faithful and able to perform it: And he that is thus disposed in judgment and affection toward God, no wonder if his demeanour be very acceptable to him.

Thus is faith precious, considering its nature, and those essential ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth include or imply. It will also appear to be so, if we consider its rise, and those good dispositions, which concur in its production.

III. 1. To the engendering of faith there is required a mind sober, composed and wakeful, ready to observe what befalleth, apt to embrace what is offered, conducive to our good and advantage; a mind not so drowned in worldly care, sensual enjoyment, or impertinent sport, as to oversee or neglect the concerns of our better part, and eternal state.

Deut. 29. 4. That we may believe, we must have *eyes to see, and ears to hear, and a heart to understand;* we must attently look with our eyes; we must incline our ears to *God's word;* we must apply our heart to instruction.
Matt. 13. 9.
11. 15. Apoc. 2. 7. Pl. 78. 1.
Job 13. 17.
Ila. 32. 3. 35. 5. Prov. 23. 12. 2. 10. 4. 1, 20. 7. 24.

Thus in the Apostolical history we may observe, that when the Apostles, in a manner apt to stir any man, being awake, to remark, did propose their doctrine, some readily did yield their ears and hearts to their discourse; while others did not mind or regard it.

2. Faith doth require much diligence and industry: we must have the patience to give God the hearing, carefully attending to what is propounded, as it is said of *Lydia*, that she did *negoticeu*, attend to the words spoken by *Saint Paul*, and *dei negoticeu negoticeu*, we must (saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*) yield extraordinary attention to the things heard; we must, as our Saviour warneth, let the Evangelical word sink down into our ears: we must take the pains to consider the notions, and to weigh the reasons enforcing them; as the *Beræans* did, who did *anagignoskein tas gegoras*, examine the Scriptures, whether those things were so, as *St. Paul* did teach out of them. We must *endein- vradai tlu aredu*, exert and demonstrate that studious care, which is requisite to get a clear knowledge, and firm persuasion concerning the points of belief; for he that received the seed into the good ground, was *o ton logon akousas kai ouk epe- heard the word, and did understand it*, or well consider it; God for this reason doth lay his truth not so open, or obvious, that we may be somewhat exercised, and put to use a pious diligence in finding it; it lieth under the surface, that we may delve for it; searching the Scriptures, weighing reasons, comparing things.

3. Faith must needs proceed from sincerity, and soundness of judgment.

The assent, which upon contemplation, and considering of things, we do yield to them, is usually termed judgment; and it much resembleth that act, whose name it borroweth; for as he is a good judge, who after a full cognifance, and careful discussion of the case with its pleas, doth pronounce freely and fairly, being no way swayed either by his own inclination, or by temptation from without; who is not biased by any previous affection or dislike, not drawn by favour, not daunted by fear, not bribed by profit, not charmed by flattery, not dazzled by specious appearance, not gulled by crafty insinuations, or by fine speech; not tired by solicitation or importunity, not seduced by precedents or custom; not perverted by any such means, which are indirect, impertinent, or extrinsecal to the cause, so as to give a wrong sentence; so is he that assenteth to Christian truth: many considerations will exempt him from any suspicion of being any- wise so corrupted.

For

For the Gospel cometh under trial in a guise no-wise plausible or advantageous to human conceit: its garb and circumstances are no-wise taking, or attractive of any favour to it; but such rather, as are apt to raise dislike and scandal against it; it being, as St. Paul saith, presented up in earthen vessels, in way very homely, and contemptible. It representeth a mean, a poor, a persecuted crucified man offering salvation, and claiming obedience; attended by persons of like condition and fortune, urging the same overtures and pretences upon us; and what impression is such an appearance likely to work upon our fancy, which is prone to affect splendid and pompous shews?

The same doth not present to us any bribe of gain, doth not tempt us with any hope of preferment, doth not allure us with any bait of pleasure; but challengeth a free sentence; and that such an one, which may greatly prejudice our worldly interests, may spoil our profit, may stop our preferment, may dash all our pleasure; *in the world ye shall have tribulation; we must through many tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God; Every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution; If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me*: such are the promises and enticements it useth.

Neither doth it sooth or court us by glozing speech, so as to recommend it self to our fancies by raising in us a good conceit of our selves; but dealeth bluntly and coarsely with us; faithfully and plainly acquainting us with our own case, involved in its cause; how grievous sinners we be, how obnoxious to justice we stand; how worthless we are, how wretched we shall be, secluding that mercy and grace of God, which it tendereth upon its own terms, of confessing our guilt, disclaiming our merit, humbly seeking mercy, forsaking our own ways, and submitting to God's will.

It doth not solicit us in trim language, nor by sly insinuations doth inveigle us to embrace it, but in downright terms, in a plain dress of speech, in a resolute strain doth charge us, upon our peril, to do it right, denouncing upon our refusal extremities of wrath and vengeance.

It advanceth pleas against the bent of our temper, which ever is prone to things forbidden, and averse from things enjoined by it: against the prejudices of our mind, which is always apt to approve or to admire things, which it condemneth or vilifieth; to dislike or despise things, which it commendeth and magnifieth: against the affections of our heart, the dearest objects of whose love, delight and care it would discard and drive from us; the most unwelcome and disgustful things whereto, it would introduce and bring to us: against our strongest appetites, and most earnest passions; the violent motions of which it doth curb and check, doth quell, or doth allay: against many temptations, potently drawing us to things from which it reclaimeth, stoutly driving us from things which it recommendeth: against the stream of habitual usage, and the torrent of common example, things so prevalent upon us: in fine, against our selves, such as we naturally are, such as we by education and custom are made; whom it impeacheth of heinous guilt and enormous folly; whose conceit and credit it debaseth; whom it depresseth into the confines of hell and misery: all within us, all about us do with might and main oppose it; Our lust, our fancy, our honour, our interest, our reputation, our principles, our customs, our friends, our enemies; the flesh, the world, the Devil, all combinedly are so many fierce adversaries, so many shrewd advocates, so many clamorous solicitors against its cause.

He therefore, who notwithstanding all these disadvantages determineth in favour of it, must assuredly be a very upright, impartial, and incorrupt judge; declaring his sense purely according to the dictates of his reason and conscience.

What indeed greater integrity can a man express, than in thus deciding a cause referred to him so much against himself, as he is naturally affected, and standeth related to things here? what greater equity can he shew, than in avowing so harsh, so rough, so unpleasing truths, so little gratifying his own sense or fancy, so little favouring his profit or pleasure? what greater ingenuity can there be, than to espouse that doctrine, which pincheth our liberty within so

narrow

narrow bounds, which layeth such restraints upon our thoughts, our words, our actions; which interdicteth to us so many enjoyments, which exacteth from us so great pains?

4. To the begetting faith there must concur humility, or a readiness to entertain sober and moderate opinions of our selves, together with suitable affections and desires; for he that with hearty persuation and serious resolution embraceth Christianity, doth thereby stoop to many things very cross to the vain conceit, the proud humour, and haughty stomach of man.

The first step into the Christian state is a sight and sense of our own imperfection, weakness, baseness and misery: we must discern and feel, that our mind is very blind, and our reason very feeble; that our will is very impotent, lame, depraved, prone to evil, and averse from good: that our life is void of merit, and polluted with guilt; that our condition is deplorably sad and wretched; that

2 Cor. 3. 5. of our selves we are insufficient to think, or do any good, in order to our recovery, or deliverance; whence we are obliged to sore compunction of spirit for our deeds and our case, to humble confession of our sins and miseries, to earnest supplication for mercy and grace, to heal and rescue us from our sad estate: *Lord, have mercy on me a sinner; what shall I do to be saved? Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* such are the ejaculations of a soul teeming with faith.

Naz. Or. 26. P. 454. He that entereth into the faith, must therewith entirely submit his understanding, and resign his judgment to God, as his master and guide; being ready to believe whatever God declareth, however to his seeming unintelligible or incredible; to follow whither God conducteth, although like *Abraham* he knoweth not whither he goeth; to approve that which God ordaineth, however distasteful to his sense; to undertake that which God requireth, however difficult; to bear that which God imposeth, how burthensome soever; being content that divine wisdom shall absolutely sway and reign over his wisdom; that his reason shall be puzzled, shall be baffled in many cases; that his mind shall be rified of all its prejudices, its fond curiosities, its presumptuous confidences, of every thought, and device advancing it self against divine truth.

He must abandon all good opinion of himself, all conceitedness of his own worth, merit, excellency, felicity in any kind; slighting his wealth, his power, his dignity, his wit, his wisdom, and the like advantages, natural or secular, which are so much prized in vulgar and worldly esteem; as things in themselves of no consideration, nor otherwise valuable than as talents entrusted by God, or instruments of his service; disowning them from himself, as things freely dispensed by God, and absolutely depending on his disposal: saying with

Phil. 3. 8, 9. *St. Paul, Tea doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him; not having my own righteousness, which is of the law; but that which is through the faith of Christ.*

He also that cordially doth embrace the Christian doctrine, with resolution of conforming his practice thereto, must look for it to sustain much disgrace; to be hated, to be censured and taxed, to be slighted and scorned, to be reproached, to be spurned as a fool, an Idiot, a humourist, a silly, superstitious, phantastical, morose body, by the world, and the adherents to its corrupt principles, its vitious fashions, its depraved sentiments and practices; who will wonder (with indignation and scorn) at those, who do not run into the same Excess of riot, speaking evil and railing at them: especially in times, when wickedness doth lift up its horn, when profaneness doth not only much prevail, but doth insult, and vapour over piety.

Every Christian, as such, immediately doth admit notions quite debasing high conceit, which ascribe all our good things purely to divine bounty; which allow us to own nothing but evils springing from our defects, infirmities, and corruptions, from our guilty naughtiness and folly; which display our great imperfection, indigency, impotency, ignorance, error, unworthiness and forlorn wretchedness; which assure, that we do subsist in total dependance upon God, continually needing his protection, succour and mercy.

He

He must undertake the practice of duties extremely cross to proud humour; to comport with injuries and affronts, without revenge, without resentment of them; to place himself beneath others; to be content with his state, how mean and poor soever; to bear patiently all events incident to him, however sad and grievous; with the like, contrary to the gust of a proud heart.

He that doth thus demean himself, embracing such notions, and complying with such duties, how can he otherwise than be a very humble, sober and modest person?

5. To faith much fortitude, much resolution and courage must conspire: for he that firmly persuadeth himself to be a Christian, doth embark in a most difficult and dreadful warfare; doth undertake most high and hazardous enterprises; doth engage in the boldest adventures, that a man can set upon; he intendeth to encounter most puissant, stout, and fierce enemies; to fight many a bloody battle; to attack many a strong hold, to sustain many a sharp brunt, to endure many sore hardships, to run into many terrible dangers, to break through many tough difficulties, to surmount many great discouragements, impediments and oppositions.

He doth set himself in array against the world, the flesh, and the Devil, that strong confederacy banded against him with their utmost force of strength and subtilty.

He must combat the world, by its fair looks, flatteries and caresses enticing to sin; by its frowns, menaces and rough treatments deterring from duty, ensnaring us by its profits, its glories, its pleasures; seducing us by its bad customs and examples, distracting us with its cares, and amusements of business.

He must cope with the flesh, that intestine and treacherous foe; which with its corrupt prejudices and imaginations, with its stubborn proclivities, with its impetuous appetites, with its boisterous passions, doth war against our soul, striving to bring our minds into captivity under the law of sin, which is in our members.

He must grapple with the Devil, that strong one, that greedy lion, that wily snake, that ruful dragon, always waiting to surprize us, always gaping to devour us, always laying close trains to entrap us, always throwing fiery darts of temptation to consume or scorch us; Our wrestling (as the Apostle doth express it) is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places.

In these conflicts he must expect to meet with many a grievous repulse, to bear many a hard knock, to feel many a sore wound; to be often beat back, often knocked down, often thrust through, often trampled on, and insulted over.

To set on these things is surely the highest gallantry that can be; he that hath the heart to attempt and undergo such things, is a daring and brave man indeed; he that successfully can achieve such exploits, is truly a Heroe; most deserving notable trophies, and everlasting monuments of renown.

The undertakings of Alexander, of Hannibal, of Caesar did not signifie valour like to this, their achievements were but toys in comparison to these: those famous gallants would have found it infinitely harder to conquer the world in this way; to have subdued their lusts, and mastered their passions, would have proved far more difficult, than to get advantage in scuffles with armed men; to discomfit legions of Devils, would have been to them another kind of work, than was the vanquishing squadrons of Persians, of Gauls, of Romans: to have set upon their own ambition and vanity, their intemperance, their revenge, to have quelled those inward enemies, to have sustained affronts, disgraces, afflictions, with a calm and contented mind, would have more tried their courage, than all which they attempted; making a great shew, but signifying little of true fortitude.

6. The noble vertue of patience is likewise necessary to faith; thereto all kinds of patience must concur; patience of labour in God's service, and obedience to all his commands; patience of hope in waiting for the accomplishment of God's pleasure; patience of persecution for God's sake, and in conscience of our duty to him; patience of crosses and afflictions by God's Disposal allotted to us for our instruction, our exercise, our probation, our correction and improvement in goodness. For,

E

Christia-

Heb. 5. 8. Christianity is the great School, and special Academy of patience, wherein
 Heb. 12. 6. we are informed, are inured, are trained up and tried to bear all things: The
 Matt. 16. 24. cross is the badge of our profession, without willingly carrying which, we can-
 Rom. 8. 29. not be the children of God, or disciples of Christ; whereby we are conformed to
 Isa. 53. 3. the image of our Lord, the man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief: Tribulati-
 1 Thes. 3. 3. on is our lot, to which we are appointed; and to which we are called, persecuti-
 1 Pet. 2. 21. on is the condition, proposed to us; it being told us, that Every one, who will
 1 Tim. 3. 12. live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution; affliction is the way toward
 Acts 14. 22. our happiness, for by many afflictions we must enter into the Kingdom of heaven;
 Phil. 1. 29. it is represented as a favour granted to us to suffer; for *ὁπὺν ἐχαίρειν*, to you,
 Eph. 3. 13. (saith St. Paul) it hath been indulged, not only to believe in Christ, but to suffer
 Matt. 5. 11. for him; it is our glory, our joy, our beatitude. Our work is to run with pati-
 James 1. 2. ence the race that is set before us; in fine, faith and patience are the pair,
 Rom. 5. 3. which being coupled together draw us to the inheritance of the promises; pati-
 James 1. 12. ence being needful to introduce and support faith.
 1 Pet. 4. 14.
 3. 14.
 Heb. 12. 1. Heb. 6. 12. Apoc. 13. 10. Heb. 10. 36. Luke 21. 19.

7. With faith also must concur the vertue of prudence; in all its parts and instances: therein is exerted a sagacity, discerning things as they really are in themselves, not as they appear through the masks and disguises of fallacious semblance, whereby they would delude us; not suffering us to be abused by the gaudy shews, the false glosses, the tempting allurements of things; therein we must use discretion in prizing things rightly, according to their true nature and intrinsic worth; in chusing things really good, and rejecting things truly evil, however each kind may seem to our erroneous sense; therein we must have a good prospect extending it self to the final consequences of things, so that looking over present contingencies we descry what certainly will befall us through the course of eternal ages.

In faith is exercised that prudence, which guideth and prompteth us to walk by the best rules, to act in the best manner, to apply the best means toward attainment of the best ends.

Rom. 13. 14. The prudence of faith is indeed the only prudence considerable; all other
 prudence regarding objects very low and ignoble, tending to designs very mean
 or base, having fruits very poor or vain: To be wise about affairs of this life
 (these fleeting, these empty, these deceitful shadows) is a sorry wisdom; to
 James 3. 15. be wise in *purveying for the flesh*, is the wisdom of a beast, which is wise enough
 James 3. 17. to prog for its sustenance; to be wise in gratifying fancy, is the wisdom of a
 child, who can easily entertain and please himself with trifles; to be wise in con-
 triving mischief, or embroiling things is the wisdom of a Fiend, in which the
 old serpent, or grand politician of hell doth exceed all the *Machiavels* in the
 world; this (as St. James saith) is *earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom*; but the
 wisdom of faith, or that *wisdom, which is from above, is first pure, then peacea-
 ble; gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good works.*

Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 3. 8. In fine, the embracing Christian doctrine doth suppose a mind imbued
 with all kinds of vertuous disposition in some good degree; for seeing that do-
 ctrine doth highly commend, and strictly prescribe all Vertue, he must needs be
 a friend to all vertue, and a devoted servant thereto, who can heartily approve,
 and like it: his eye must be sound, and clear from mists of bad prejudice, who
 can ken the beauty, and bear the lustre of it; his palate must be pure from
 vitious tinctures who can relish its sweetness, his heart must be void of corrupt
 affections and desires, who sincerely doth affect it, and firmly doth cleave there-
 to: his conscience must be good, who can hope for the excellent rewards which it
 proposeth, who can stand proof against the terrible menaces it denounceth; his
 intentions must be upright, who dareth offer them to be scann'd by so exact rules;
 his life must in good measure be blameless, who can present it before the bar of so
 rigorous judgment; he must be a man of much goodness, ingenuity and integrity,
 who can think it expedient, who can be content and willing that such a doctrine
 be accounted true, which so plainly discountenanceth, which so peremptorily
 condemneth, which so severely punisheth all kinds of wickedness; for He (as
 John 3. 21. our Saviour saith, and he alone) *who doeth the truth, doth come to the light, that his*

his deeds may be manifested. Faith therefore, and good conscience are well by St. Paul so often coupled, as inseparable associates.

1 Tim. i. 5.
1. 19. 3. 9.

Where now are they, who wonder, that faith is so commended, doth find such acceptance with God, and is so crowned with reward; who would banish it from the company of virtues, and out of all moral consideration; who would have it taken for an involuntary act, forced on the mind, and issuing from dry speculation? for, seeing so many excellent dispositions of soul are its ingredients, essentially connected with it, seeing so many noble acts of will do concur to its production, seeing it hath so many choice virtues inseparably adherent, as previous or concomitant to it; it is no wonder that they should moralize it, should render it very considerable, so capable of praise, so worthy of recompence.

If we therefore do believe, because we will apply our minds to regard our best concerns, because we will yield due attention to the declarations and overtures of God, because we will take the pains to weigh the reasons persuasive of truth, because we look on things with an indifferent eye, and judge uprightly about them; because we have the courage, the patience, the prudence, the innocence, requisite for avowing such truths; then surely faith is voluntary, and therefore very commendable.

Whoever indeed will consider the nature of man, or will consult obvious experience, shall find, that in all practical matters, our will, or appetite hath a mighty influence upon our judgment of things; causing men with great attention to regard that which they affect, and carefully to mark all reasons making for it; but averting from that which they dislike, and making them to overlook the arguments which persuade it; whence men generally do sute their opinions to their inclinations; warping to that side where their interest doth lie, or to which their complexion, their humour, their passions, their pleasure, their ease doth sway them; so that almost any notion will seem true, which is profitable, which is safe, which is pleasant, or any-wise grateful to them; that notion false, which in any such respect doth cross them; very few can abstract their minds from such considerations, or embrace pure truth, divested of them; and those few, who do so, must therein most employ their will, by strong efforts of voluntary resolution and patience disengaging their minds from those clogs and byasses. This is particularly notorious in mens adherence to Parties, divided in opinion, which is so regulated by that sort of causes, that if you do mark what any man's temper is, and where his interest lieth, you may easily prognosticate on what side he will be; and with what degree of seriousness, of vigour, of zeal, he will cleave thereto; a timorous man you may be almost sure will be on the safer side; a covetous man will bend to that party, where gain is to be had; an ambitious man will close with the opinion passing in Court; a careless man will comply with the fashion; affection arising from education, or prejudice will hold others stiff; few do follow the results of impartial contemplation.

— facile
qua credita
profunt Credin-
mus —

All faith therefore even in common things may be deemed voluntary, no less than intellectual; and Christian faith is especially such, as requiring thereto more application of soul, managed by choice, than any other; whence the Ancients in their description of it, do usually include this condition, supposing it not to be a bare assent of the understanding, but a free consent of the will: Faith (saith Clemens Alex.) is a spontaneous acceptance, and compliance with divine religion; and, To be made at first was not in our power; but God persuaded us to follow those things, which he liketh, chusing by the rational faculties, which he hath given us, and so leadeth us to faith; saith Justin the Martyr.

Πίστις πρὸς θεὸν
ἡ ἐκείνου
ἐστὶν, θεοσεβείας
συγκρατῆ-
σις, &c.
Clem. Strom.
2. p. 265.

Ἐδιδόντων συνέπειδ' πρὸ συμφορῆντι συνήτοις ἀρχῇ, Ibid. Τὸ μὴ ἀρχῇ γενέσθαι ἢ ἡμετέρον βού. τὸ δ' ἑξακολουθεῖν οἷς οἱ-
λον αὐτοῦ αἰσχυμῆναι δὲ ἂν αὐτοῖς ἐδωκῆτο λογικῶν δυνάμεων περὶ τὴν εἰς τὴν ἀγίαν ἡμᾶς. Just. M. Apol. 2. (p. 58.)

The same is supposed in holy Scripture; where of believers it is said, that they did ἀσμένως, gladly, or willingly receive the word, and they received it μετὰ πᾶ-
σης προθυμίας with all willingness, or readiness of mind.

Acts 2. 41.
Acts 17. 11.

And to defect of will infidelity is often ascribed: Te will not come unto me (saith our Saviour) that ye might have life; and, How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not?

John 5. 40.
Luke 13. 34.

Matt. 22. 3. and, *The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain King, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come: and, Of this (saith St. Peter of some profane infidels) they are willingly ignorant, that by the word of God the heavens were of old; and of the like St. Paul saith, that they received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

2 Pet. 3. 5. *Indeed to prevent this exception, that faith is a forced act, and therefore not moral; or to render it more voluntary, and worthy, God hath not done all that he might have done to convince men, or to wring belief from them: he hath not stamped on his truth that glaring evidence, which might dazzle our minds; he doth not propose it armed with irresistible cogency, he hath not made the objects of faith conspicuous to sense, nor the propositions thereof demonstrable by reason, like theorems of Geometry; this indeed would be to depose faith, to devalue it of its excellency, and bereave it of its praise; this were to deprive us of that blessedness, which is adjudged to those, who believe and do not see: this would prostitute Wisdom to be deflowered by the foolish; and expose truth to be rifled by the profane: this would take from our reason its noblest exercise, and fairest occasion of improvement; this would confound persons fit to be distinguished, the sagacious and the stupid, the diligent and the slothful, the ingenuous and the froward, the sober and the vain, the pious and the profane; the children of wisdom, which are apt to justify it, and the sons of folly, who hate knowledge; the friends of truth and virtue, and the lovers of falsehood and unrighteousness.*

2 Thes. 2. 10, 12. *God therefore hath exhibited his truth, shining through some mists of difficulty and doubt, that only those who have clear eyes, who do look attentively, who are willing to see, may discern it; that those who have eyes may see, and those who have ears may hear. He meaneth this way of discovering his mind for a test to prove our ingenuity, for a field to exercise our industry, for an occasion to express his goodness in crowning the wisdom and virtue of good believers; that — the trial of your faith (saith St. Peter) being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. He meaneth also thence to display his justice in punishing the slothful, the vain, the perverse, the profane; that (as the Apostle saith) all men might be judged, who believed not the truth — but had pleasure in unrighteousness: Hence, there must of necessity be scandals, said our Saviour; hence our Lord was set for a mark to be contradicted, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed; and, there must be heresies; saith St. Paul; why? that they (1 John 2. 19.) which are approved (οἱ δοκῶντες, persons that can bear the test) may be manifested.*

Matt. 11. 15. *God dealeth with us, as he did with his ancient people; he to assure them of his gracious protection and providence over them; or to persuade them of the truth of what he by Moses taught them, did before their eyes perform stupendious works in their behalf, affording them miraculous deliverances from their enemies, and prodigious supplies of their needs; the sight of which did extort a temporary belief; then (it is said) they believed his words, and sang his praise; and, when Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses. Yet withal God suffered divers things to fall out, to humble them (as it is said) and to prove them, and to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments, or no: The result of which dispensations was, that they being inconsiderate, impatient and refractory, believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation; they despised that pleasant land, and gave no credence to his word; So God dealt with that typical people; and in like manner doth he proceed with us; he hath ministered signal attestations to the Gospel; he hath dispensed arguments abundantly sufficient to convince well disposed minds of its truth; but he hath not cleared it from all scruples, which may disturb the froward or the delicate; he hath not exempted it from all scandals, which may disgust the perverse, and stubborn; he hath not prevented all exceptions or cavils devisable by curious or captious wits against it; he hath not guarded it*

Matt. 11. 13. 9. *it*
Matt. 13. 11. *it*
Chrys. in John Or. 5. *it*
1 Pet. 1. 7, 8. *it*
James 1. 3. *it*
2 Thes. 2. 12. *it*
Matt. 18. 7. *it*
Luke 17. 1. *it*
Luke 2. 35. *it*
1 Cor. 11. 19. *it*
(1 John 2. 19.) *it*
Psal. 78. 105, 106. *it*
Psal. 106. 12. *it*
Exod. 14. 31. *it*
Deut. 4. 32. *it*
8. 2. 7. 19. *it*
Psal. 78. 22. *it*
32, 56, &c. *it*
Psal. 106. 24. *it*
Neh. 9. 16. *it*
Deut. 1. 32. *it*

it wholly from the malicious opposition of those, whose interest it might seem, in favour of their vices and follies, to impugn it; just it was, that to such the Gospel should be a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; who stumble at the word, being disobedient, unto which they were appointed (that is, God having so purposely ordered the Evangelical dispensation, that such persons should not approve it, or comply with it) just it was, that they should be debarred from a knowledge of that truth, which they should abuse, and detain in unrighteousness; just it was, that they should be punished with such temptations unto doubt and error, who would not receive the love of the truth; that they might be saved.

Indeed, more abundant light of conviction, as it would deprive good men of much praise and reward, so it might be hurtful to many persons; who having affections indisposed to comply with truth, would outface and outbrave it, however clear and evident; they would (as Job speaketh) rebel against the light, although shining on them with a meridian splendour: they would plunge themselves into an inexcusable, and incorrigible state of impiety, doing despite to the spirit of grace, and involving themselves in the unpardonable sin; as we have many instances in the Evangelical History of those, who beholding unquestionable evidences of divine power attesting to our Lord's doctrine, which they could not but acknowledge, did yet oppose it, did blaspheme against it, did outrageously persecute it.

Should God, as he once did in a dreadful manner, thunder out his laws, and shake the earth with his voice, yet many would little regard them: should God in confirmation of his will perform every day as many miracles, as he did once in Egypt, yet there would be Pharaohs, hardning their hearts against it; should God himself descend from heaven, as once he did, and converse with us, instructing us by discourse and practice, displaying among us conspicuous evidences of his power and goodness, yet who would believe his report, to whom would the arm of the Lord be revealed? how few cordially would embrace his doctrine, or submit to his Law? as it was then, so it would be now; he would be hated, be scorned, be affronted and abused, by persons qualified with like affections, as those were, who so then did serve him; for in all times like persons will do like things: as then only his sheep (that is, well disposed persons, like sheep, simple, harmless and ductile) did hear his voice, and follow him; so others would not believe him, because they were not of his sheep, being imbued with swinish, currish, wolvisb dispositions, incapacitating them to follow his conduct; there would be persons like to those, of whom it is said, Behold ye scorners, and wonder, and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

(It is with instituted Religion, as it is with natural; the works of nature are so many continual miracles of divine power and wisdom; in the common track of providence many wonderful things do occur; yet who by them is moved to acknowledge and adore God? notwithstanding them, how many Atheists and Epicureans are there? so will it be in regard to divine Revelations, which however clearly attested, will yet be questioned.)

Those indeed whom sufficient reasons (such as God hath dispensed to us) will not convince, upon them the greatest motives would have small efficacy; so Father Abraham told the rich man — If they hear not Moses, and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Chryl. in Matt. Or. 43. Luke 16. 30. John 5. 47.

They may pretend, if they had more light, they would be persuaded; like those who said, Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe; but it would not in effect prove so, for they would yet be devising shifts, and forging exceptions; or however they would oppose an impudent face, and an obstinate will against the truth.

Wherefore it was for the common good, and to divine wisdom it appeared sufficient, that upon the balance truth should much outweigh falshood, if the scales were held in an even hand, and no prejudices were thrown in against it; that it should be conspicuous enough to eyes, which do not avert themselves from it, or wink on purpose, or be clouded with lust and passion; it was enough

enough that infidelity is justly chargeable on mens wilful pravity; and that
 John 15. 22. *περὶ αὐτῶν ἐκ ἔχουσι, they have not (as our Saviour saith) any reasonable excuse*
 for it.

But so much for the causes and adjuncts of Faith; the effects and consequences of it I reserve for another occasion.

I Believe, &c.

S E R M O N III.

OF THE

Vertue and Reasonableness

OF

F A I T H.

II PET. I. 1.

----- *To them that have obtained like precious faith with us.*

OF all Christian virtues, as there is none more approved and dignified by God, so there is none less considered or valued by men than Faith; the Adversaries of our Religion have always had a special pique at it; wondering that it should be commanded, as if it were an arbitrary thing or in our choice to believe what we please; why it should be commended, as if it were praise-worthy to be subdued by reason; either by that which is too strong for us to resist, or by that which is too weak to conquer us.

But that Faith worthily deserveth the praises and privileges assigned thereto, we may be satisfied, if we do well consider its nature and ingredients, its causes and rise, its effects and consequences.

In its nature it doth involve knowledge, or the possession of truth, which is the natural food, the proper wealth, the special ornament of our soul; knowledge of truths most worthy of us, and important to us, as conversing about the highest objects, and conducing to the noblest use; knowledge peculiar and not otherwise attainable, as lying without the sphere of our sense, and beyond the reach of our reason; knowledge conveyed to us with great evidence and assurance; the greatest indeed that well can be, considering the nature of its objects, and the general capacities of men, and the most proper way of working upon reasonable natures.

It implieth (that which giveth to every vertue its form and worth) a good use of our reason, in carefully weighing, and uprightly judging about things, of greatest concernment to us; it implieth a closing with God's providence dispensing opportunities, and representing motives serving to beget it; a compliance with God's grace attracting and inclining our souls to embrace his heavenly truth;

truth : it implyeth also good opinions of God, and good affections toward him, which are requisite to the believing (upon his testimony, promise, or command) points very sublime, very difficult, very cross to our fancy and humour.

The causes also, which concur in its production, are very excellent ; many vertuous dispositions of soul are requisite to the conception and birth of it : there must be a sober, composed and wakeful mind, inquisitive after truth, apt to observe its starting, and ready to lay hold on it ; there must be diligence and industry in attending to the proposals, and considering the enforcements of it ; there must be sincerity and soundness of judgment, in avowing its cause, against the exceptions raised against it by prejudice and carnal conceit, by sensual appetites and passions, by temptations and worldly interest : there must be great humility, disposing us to a submission of our understanding, and a resignation of our will unto God, in admitting notions which debase haughty conceit, in espousing duties which repress sturdy humour : there must be much resolution and courage in undertaking things very difficult, hazardous and painful ; much patience, in adhering to a profession, which exacteth so much pain, and exposeth to so much trouble : there must be great prudence, in applying our choice (among so many competitions and pretences claiming it) to that which is only good ; in seeing through fallacious disguises, and looking over present appearances, so as to descry the just worth, and the final consequence of things : there must in fine be a love of truth, and a liking of all virtue, which is so highly commended, and so strictly prescribed by the Christian doctrine.

These particulars, commending Faith to us, I have already largely prosecuted ; I shall only therefore now insist upon the last Head, concerning its effects, whereby (as the goodness of a tree is known by its fruits) the great excellency thereof will appear.

Its effects are of two sorts, one springing naturally from it, the other following it in way of recompence from divine bounty ; I shall only touch the first sort ; because in this its vertue is most seen, as in the other its felicity.

Faith is naturally efficacious in producing many rare fruits ; naturally I say, not meaning to exclude supernatural grace, but supposing Faith to be a fit instrument thereof ; for *God worketh in us to will, and to do*, but in a way suitable to our nature, employing such means as properly serve to incline and excite us unto good practice ; and such is Faith, supported and wielded by his grace ; for (Acts 11. 24.) indeed

Even in common life Faith is the compass by which men steer their practice, and the main spring of action, setting all the wheels of our activity on going : every man acteth with serious intention, and with vigour answerable to his persuasion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours ; what moveth the husbandman to employ so much care, toil and expence in manuring his ground, in plowing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it ; but a persuasion that he shall reap a crop, which in benefit will answer all ? what stirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vast and dangerous seas, adventuring his stock, abandoning his ease, exposing his life to the waves, to rocks and shelves, to storms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates, to sweltry heats and piercing colds, but a persuasion, that wealth is a very desirable thing, and that hereby he may acquire it ? what induceth a man to conform unto strictest rules of diet and abstinence, readily to swallow down the most unsavory potions, patiently to endure cuttings and burnings, but a faith that he thereby shall recover or preserve health, that highly valuable good ? from the same principle are all the carking, all the plodding, all the drudging, all the daring, all the scuffling in the world easily derivable : In like manner is Faith the square and the source of our spiritual activity, disposing us seriously to undertake, earnestly, resolutely, industriously and constantly to pursue the designs of virtue and piety ; brooking the pains and hardships, breaking through the difficulties and hazards, which occur in religious practice ; engaging us to the performance of duty, deterring us from the commission of sin.

What but Faith eyeing *the prize*, will quicken us to *run patiently the race that is set before us* ? what but Faith apprehending *the crown*, will animate us to *fight stoutly the good fight* ? what but Faith assuring the wages, will support us in *working all the day with unwearied industry and patience* ? what can raise pious hope, 6. 7.

Heb. 12. 1.
Phil. 3. 14.
1 Cor. 9. 24.

2 Tim. 4. 7.
1 Tim. 1. 8.

hope, what can kindle holy desire, what can spurr on conscientious endeavour, but a faith of attaining worthy recompences for doing well? what can impress an effectual dislike and dread of offending, but a faith of incurring grievous punishment and sad mischiefs thence?

In reason, a strong and steady belief but of one point or two, would suffice to engage us upon all duty, and to restrain us from all sin: did we only believe the future judgment, with the results of it, that alone would be an effectual both spurr and curb to us: for who believing that his soul then shall be laid bare, that his inmost thoughts and secretest purposes shall be disclosed unto the view of all the world, will presume to harbour in his breast any foul thought, or base design? who believing, that he shall then be obliged to render an account of *every idle word*, will dare to utter villainous blasphemies, wicked curses, fond oaths, profane jests, vile slanders or detractions, harsh censures, or bitter reproaches? who being perswaded, that a rigorous amends will then be exacted from him for any wrong he doeth, will not be afraid with violence to oppress, or with fraud to circumvent his neighbour? who deeming himself accountable then for every talent and opportunity, will find in his heart to squander away or misemploy his time, his power, his wealth, his credit, his wit, his knowledge, his advantages in any kind of doing God service? who knowing himself obnoxious to a sudden trial, whereat his estate, his reputation, his life, all his interest and welfare must lie at stake, will contentedly lose his mind in wanton sports, or wild frolicks? in fine, if we are really perswaded, that presently after this short and transitory life, we shall openly in the face of God, Angels and Men, be arraigned at an impartial bar, where all our thoughts, our words, our actions shall most exactly be sifted and scanned, according to which cognisance a just doom shall be pronounced, and certainly executed upon us; how must this needs engage us to be very sober and serious, very circumspect and vigilant over our mind, our tongue, our dealings or conversation, our whole life?

Again, If a man firmly believeth, that by a pious course of life, he shall gain the present favour and friendship of the Almighty, with all the real goods, whereof he is capable; and that hereafter he shall be rewarded for it with an eternal life in perfect rest, in glory, in joy, in beatitude unspeakable; that he shall obtain *an incorruptible inheritance, a treasure that can never fail, a crown that will not fade, a kingdom that cannot be shaken*; wherein he shall enjoy the blissful vision of God, smiling in love upon him; the presence of his gracious Redeemer, embracing him with dear affection; the most delightful Society of blessed Angels, and *just spirits made perfect*; a state of felicity, surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest pleasures here, can yield but a faint resemblance; how can he forbear earnestly to embrace and pursue such a course of practice? what zeal must such a persuasion inspire, what vigour must it rouse within him? who upon any terms would forfeit the hopes of such a happiness? who would not be glad to undertake any pains, or endure any hardships for it?

And who likewise heartily is perswaded, that by vitious conversation he shall incur the wrath of Almighty God, and stand obnoxious to the strokes of his severe justice; that persisting therein, he infallibly must drop into the bottomless pit, into that utter darkness, that furnace of fire unquenchable, that lake of flaming brimstone; where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the immortal worm shall gnaw on his heart, and he must feel the pangs of a

Mat. 18. 30. Jud. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 4.
Luke 4. 31. Apoc. 20. 3. Matt. 8.
12. 13. 42. 50. Mark 9. 43. 45.
(ll. 33. 14.) Rev. 20. 21.

Mat. 9. 44.
Apoc. 20. 10.
Dan. 12. 2.
Everlasting
same.
2 Thes. 1. 9.
Rom. 2. 9.
5890X.

never-dying death; that state of most bitter remorse, of most horrid despair, of most forlorn disconsolateness, of continual and endless torment; wherein he shall be banished from the face of God, and by immutable destiny barr'd from all light, all ease, all solace; from any glimpse of hope, from any respite of pain; the wretchedness of which condition, not the sharpest pain of body, not the forest anguish of mind, not the saddest distress here can any-wise reach, or represent: whoever, I say, is possessed with a belief of these things consequent on a wicked life, will he not thence be effectually scared from it? what bait of temptation shall allure him, what force shall drive him thereto? will he for a flash of pleasure, for a puff of fame, for a lump of pelf; will he in complement or complaisance to others, in apish imitation or compliance with a fashion, out of mere

wanton-

wantonness, or in regard to some petty interest; will he in hope of any worldly good, or fear of any inconvenience here, suffer himself to be cast into that dismal state? will he not sooner go and shake a Lion by the paw, sooner provoke an Adder to bite him, sooner throw himself down a precipice, or leap into a caldron of burning pitch? certainly, in reason, to believe such things, and to sin, can hardly be consistent.

Such a general influence is faith, looking with a provident eye upon future rewards and consequences of things, apt to have upon our practice: the which collaterally taking in the glorious attributes of God, the gracious performances of our Saviour, the beauty and sweetness of each divine precept, the manifold obligations and encouragements to duty, the whole latitude and harmony of evangelical truth, all tending to the recommendation of holiness, what efficacy must it needs have? how powerfully must it incite us to good practice?

We are told, that faith doth *purify our souls*, and *cleanse our hearts*; that is, ἀγνίζει τὴν ψυχὴν. 1 Pet. 1. 22. καθαρίζει τὴν καρδίαν. Act. 15. 9. our whole interior man, all the faculties of our soul; disposing them to an universal obedience and conformity to God's holy will: And so it is; for Faith not only doth clear our understanding from its defects (blindness, ignorance, error, doubt) but it cleanseth our will from its vitious inclinations, from stubborn, froward, wanton, giddy humours; it freeth our affections from disorder and distemper, in tendency toward bad objects, and in pursuit of indifferent things with immoderate violence; it purgeth our conscience, or reflexive powers, from anxious fear, suspicion, anguish, dejection, despair, and all such passions which corrode and fret the soul. How it effecteth this, we might declare; but we cannot better set forth its efficacy and puissance, than by considering the special and immediate influence it plainly hath in the production of each virtue, or on the performance of every duty: *Add to your faith virtue*, saith St. Peter; 2 Pet. 1. 5. implying the natural order of things, and that if true faith precede virtue will 1 Tim. 6. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 22. easily follow.

The chief of all virtues *piety* (comprising the love of God, fear and reverence of him, confidence in him, gratitude for his favours and mercies, devotion toward him, a disposition to worship and serve him) seemeth according to reason inevitably consequent from it; for can we believe God superexcellent in all perfection, and immensely benign toward us; can we be persuaded, that in free goodness he did create us, and doth continually preserve us in being; that his bounty hath conferred on us all our endowments of soul, and all our accommodations of life; that he hath a tender desire of our welfare, from which even our most heinous offences and provocations cannot divert him; that he most wonderfully hath provided for our happiness; in order thereto, when we had rebelled and revolted from him, sending down out of his bosom, from the top of celestial glory and bliss, his only dear Son, into this base and frail state, to sustain the infirmities of our nature, the inconveniences of a poor life, the pains of a bitter and shameful death, for our recovery from sin and misery; that with infinite patience he driveth on this gracious design, continually watching over us, attracting us to good, and reclaiming us from evil by his grace, notwithstanding our frequent and stiff reluctances thereto; can, I say, we heartily believe these points, and not love him? can the eye of faith behold so lovely beauty, so ravishing sweetness in him, and the heart not be affected? can we apprehend so many miracles of nature, of providence, of grace performed by him for our sake, and not be thankful to him? Can we likewise believe God infinitely powerful, infinitely just, infinitely pure, and withal not dread him, not adore him? Can we believe him most able, most willing, most ready to do us good; and not confide in him? or can we take him to be most veracious, most faithful, most constant, and not rely on his promises? Can we avow him to be our Maker, our Patron, our Lord, our Judge, and not deem our selves much obliged, much concerned to serve him? Can we believe, that God in our need is accessible, that he calleth and inviteth us to him, that he is ever willing and ever ready to hear us, that he is by promise engaged to grant us whatever we do with humble fervency and constancy request; yet forbear to pray, or easily desist from it? do we believe his omnipresence and omniscience; that he is with us, wherever we go; doth know all we think, hear all we say, see all we do; and will not belief engage us to think honestly, to speak reverently, to act innocently and decent-

decently before him? do we believe, that God's commands do proceed from that will, to which rectitude is essential; from that wisdom, which infallibly discerneth what is just and fit; from that goodness, which will require from us nothing but what is best for us; from that unquestionable and uncontrollable authority, to which all things are subject, and must submit; will not this sufficiently engage us to obedience? surely the real belief (such as we have about common things, apprehended by our reason or by our sense) of any such divine act, or attribute, cannot fail to strike pious affection, and pious awe into us.

After piety, the next great virtue is *charity*, the which also is easily derived 2 Tim. 1. 15. *from a pure heart* (as St. Paul speaketh) *and faith unfeigned*: it representing peculiar obligations and inducements thereto, from the most peremptory commands of God, from the signal recompences annexed to that duty, from the strict relations between Christians, from the stupendous patterns of charity set before us. Who can withhold love from him, whom he believeth his brother, in a way far nobler than that of nature, so constituted by God himself, the common Father, by spiritual regeneration, and adoption of grace; whom he believeth born of the same heavenly seed, renewed after the same divine image, quickened by the same holy Spirit; united to him not only in blood, but in soul; resembling him not in temper of body or lineaments of face, but in conformity of judgment and practice; partner of the one inheritance, and destinated to lead a life with him through all eternity, in peaceful consortship of joy and bliss? Who can deny him love, whom he believeth out of the same miserable case by the same price redeemed into the same state of mercy? for whom he by faith vieweth the common Saviour divesting himself of glory, pinching himself with want, wearying himself with labour, loaded with contumelies, groaning under pain, weltring in blood, and breathing out his soul, propounding all this as an example of our charity, and demanding it from us as the most special instance of our grateful obedience to him? what greater endearments can be imagined, what more potent incentives of love, what more indissoluble bands of friendship, than are these? Can such a believer forbear to wish his neighbour well, to have complacence in his good, to sympathize with his adversities, to perform all offices of kindness to him? can he in the need of his brother *shut up his bowels of compassion*, or withhold his hand from relieving him? Can a man know that God requireth this practice as the noblest fruit of our faith, and most acceptable part of our obedience, which he hath promised to crown with most ample rewards? can he believe, that God will recompence his *labour of love* with everlasting rest, and for a small expence of present goods will bestow immense treasures in the other world; and yet abstain from charitable beneficence? who can forbear sowing, that believeth he shall reap so plentiful a crop; or abstain from dealing in that heavenly trade, whereby he is assured to be so vast a gainer?

In like manner is Faith productive of *meekness*, in comporting with injuries, discourtesies, neglects and provocations of any kind: for who can be fiercely angry, who can entertain any rancorous grudge or displeasure against him, whom he believeth his brother, and that upon so many accounts he is obliged to love him? Who that believeth God hath pardoned him so much, and doth continually bear so many wrongs, so many indignities from him, will not in conscience, and gratitude toward God, and in compliance with so great an Example, bear with the infirmities of his neighbour? who can look upon the pattern of his Saviour, patiently enduring so many grievous affronts, without a disposition to imitate him, and to do the like for his sake? who that taketh himself for a child of God, a citizen of heaven, an heir of eternal glory, can be so much concerned in any trivial accident here; can design to have his passion stirred for any worldly respect; as if his honour could be impaired, or his interest suffer diminution by any thing said or done here below.

Again, Faith is the mother of *sincerity*, that comprehensive virtue, which seasoneth all other virtues, and keepeth them sound: for it assuring us, that an all-seeing eye doth view our hearts, doth *encompass our paths*, is present to all our closest retirements; that *all things are naked and open to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do*, how vain must it appear to us any-wise to dissemble, or prevaricate, speaking otherwise than we think, acting otherwise than we pretend, seeming otherwise than we are, concealing our real intents, or disguising them

Psal. 139. 2.

Heb. 4. 13.

them under masks of deceitful appearance? If we believe, that we shall be judged not according to the opinions of men concerning us, or our port and garb in this world, but as we are in our selves, and according to strictest truth; that in the close of things we shall be set forth in our right colours and complexion, all varnish being wiped away; that all our thoughts, words and deeds shall be exposed to most publick censure; that hypocrisie will be a fore aggravation of our sin, and much encrease our shame? how can we satisfie our selves otherwise than in the pure integrity of our heart, and clear uprightness of our dealing?

Likewise the admirable vertue of *humility*, or sobriety of mind doth sprout from Faith; informing us, that we have nothing of our own to boast of, but that all the good we have, we can do, we may hope for are debts we owe to God's pure bounty and mercy; prompting us to ascribe nothing to our selves, but to ascribe all the honour of our endowments, of our performances, of our advantages unto God; keeping us in continual dependance upon God for the succours of his providence, and his grace; representing to us our natural weakness, vileness and wretchedness, together with the adventitious defects and disadvantages from our wilful misbehaviour, the unworthiness of our lives, the many heinous sins we have committed, and the grievous punishments we have deserved.

He who by the light of faith doth see, that he came naked into the world, heir to nothing but the sad consequences of the original Apostacy; that he is a worm, crawling on earth, feeding on dust, and tending to corruption; that he liveth only by reprieve, from that fatal sentence, *the day thou sinnest thou shalt die*; that he was a caitiff wretch, a mere slave to sin, a forlorn captive of hell; and that all his recovery thence, or capacity of a better state is wholly due to mercy; that he subsisteth only upon alms, and hath nothing but his sins and miseries, which he may call his own; he that believeth these things, what conceit can he have of himself, what confidence in his own worth, what complacency in his estate?

Faith also doth engage to the vertue of *temperance*; discovering not only the duty, but the necessity thereof, in regard to our state, which is a state of continual exercise and strife; wherefore as wrestlers with many strong adversaries, as racers for a noble prize, we by good diet and constant labour must keep our selves in heart, in temper, in breath to perform those combats; according to that of St. Paul, *Every man that striveth for the Mastery, is temperate in all things.* 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Again, Faith is productive of *contentedness* in our state; for How is it possible, that he, who is fully satisfied, that God appointeth his station, and alloteth his portion to each one; that all occurrences depend on his will, and are managed by his providence, should take any thing amiss; as if it could hap better, than as infinite goodness pleaseth, and infinite wisdom determineth? how can he, that believeth God most powerful and able, most kind and willing, ever present and ready to help him, be in any case disconsolate, or despair of seasonable relief? what can discompose him, who knoweth himself, if he pleaseth, immoveably happy; that his best good is secure from all attaques and beyond the reach of any misfortune; that desiring what is best, he cannot fail of his desire; that (himself excepted) all the world cannot considerably wrong, or hurt him?

He that is assured, those precepts, (*Be careful for nothing, Cast all your burden on God, Be content with such things as ye have*) were not given to mock and gull us; that those declarations and promises (*There is no want to them that fear God; No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly; There shall no evil happen to the just; The desire of the righteous shall be granted; All things work together for good to them who love God; Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you*) were seriously made, and will surely be performed, how loose must his mind be from all solicitude and anxiety? how steady a calm, how sweet a serenity will that faith spread over his soul, in regard to all worldly contingencies?

It will also beget a chearful tranquillity of mind, and peace of conscience, in regard to our future state; that which St. Paul calleth *all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. 15. 13.

Heb. 3. 6. *lieving*, which the Apostle to the Hebrews termeth *the confidence, and rejoicing*
 9. 14. *of hope*, of which St. Peter saith, *believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full*
 1 Pet. 1. 8. *of glory*: for he that is persuaded that God (in whose disposal his fortune, and
 felicity are) is reconciled and kindly affected toward him, that he doth con-
 cern himself in designing and procuring his salvation; that to purchase the
 means thereof for him the Son of God purposely came down, and suffered
 death; that an act of oblivion is past, and a full remission of sins exhibited to
 Rom. 8. 1. 5. 1. him, if he will embrace it; that now *there is no condemnation to them that are*
 Col. 1. 5. *in Christ Jesus*; and that, *being justified by faith we have peace with God*; that
 blessing is his portion, and that an eternal heritage of joy is reserved for him,
 what ease must he find in his conscience, what comfort must possess his heart?
 Isa. 26. 3. how effectually will that of the Prophet be accomplished in him, *Thou wilt*
keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in
thee?

Again, it is Faith, which breedeth the *courage*, and upholdeth the *patience*
 requisite to support us in our spiritual course.

It doth inspire *courage*, prompting to attempt the bravest enterprises, dispo-
 sing to prosecute them resolutely, and enabling happily to atchieve them: For he
 that believeth himself in his undertakings backed by omnipotence, and that, as
 Phil. 4. 13. St. Paul, *he can do all things through Christ strengthening him*, what should he fear
 to set upon, what difficulty should keep him off, what hazard should dismay
 (Phil. 1. 28. him? he that knoweth himself, by reason of the succour attending him, infinite-
 1 John 4. 4.) ly to overmatch all opposition, whom should he not dare to encounter? may he
 Psalm 27. 1. not well say with David; *The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I*
 118. 6. *fear; the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?* Let all the
 Chryst. Tom. world, let earth and hell combine to invade him, how can that mate his Spirit,
 7. p. 51. if he believe they cannot overthrow him, or hurt him, being secured by the in-
 Psalm 46. 1, 2. vincible protection of him, to whose will all things do bow; in comparison to
 whom nothing is puissant, beside whom nothing is really formidable; seeing
 Matt. 10. 28. none but *He can kill*, none can touch the soul?

If we be armed with the spiritual panoply, having our head covered with
 1 Thel. 5. 8. *the helmet of salvation*, our heart guarded with *the breast-plate of righteousness*,
 Eph. 6. 15. *our loyns girt about with truth*, our feet shod with *the preparation of the Gospel*
 Rom. 13. 12. *of peace*, all our body sheltred by the impenetrable shield of Faith; and wield-
 2 Cor. 6. 7. ing in our hands by faith the *penetrant two edged sword of the Spirit*; which is
 Heb. 4. 12. *the word of God*; what assaults may we not sustain, what foes shall we not
 easily repel?

The most redoubtable enemy we have is our own *flesh*, which with a migh-
 Gal. 5. 17. ty force of violent appetites and impetuous passions is ever struggling with our
 Rom. 7. 23. reason, and warring against our soul; yet it Faith alone dareth to resist, and is
 1 Pet. 2. 11. able to quell, oppoling to the present delights of sense the hopes of future joy,
 quashing transitory satisfactions by the fears of endless torment.

The *world* is another powerful enemy; ever striving by its corrupt princi-
 ples, by its bad examples, by its naughty fashions, by its menaces of persecu-
 tion, damage and disgrace, by its promises of vain honour, base profit, and foul
 pleasure to overthrow and undo us; but a resolute Faith will defeat its at-
 tempts; for *He* (saith St. John) *that is born of God, overcometh the world, and*
 1 John 5. 5. *this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*; the faith of a bet-
 (2 Pet. 1. 4. Eph. 4. 22.) ter world will defend us from the frowns, and the flatteries of this; the riches,
 glories and joys of heaven thereby presented to our minds will secure us from
 being enchanted with the wealth, splendours and pleasures of earth.

Another fierce adversary is the cursed *Fiend*; who ever like a *roaring lion go-*
 1 Pet. 5. 8. *eth about seeking to devour us*, or like a treacherous snake lieth in wait to bite
 us; raising panick fears to daunt and affright us; laying subtle trains of temp-
 tation, to abuse and seduce us; but him by resistance we may easily put to
 flight, *For resist the Devil*, saith St. James, *and he will flee from you*; and how
 James 4. 7. we must resist him, St. Peter telleth us, *Whom resist stedfast in faith*; and St.
 Eph. 4. 27. Paul also, *Above all* (saith he) *taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be*
 1 Pet. 5. 9. *able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one*; if we hold forth this glittering
 Eph. 6. 16. shield, it will dazle his sight, and damp his courage; being not able to endure
 its lustre, or stand its opposition he will instantly retire; fearing that by our
 victory

victory over his temptations (through reliance on God's help, and adherence to his truth) our reward shall be heightened, and his torment (the torment of improsperous envy and baffled malice) be encreased.

Faith also will arm us with *patience* to endure whatever events shall be dispensed, with alacrity and comfort; lightning the most heavy burthens imposed on us, sweetning the most distasteful occurrences incident to us: for

He, who is persuaded that by any damage here sustained for conscience toward God, he shall become a huge gainer, *receiving*, as the Gospel promiseth, *an hundred fold, and inheriting eternal life*, what will he not gladly lose? will he not willingly put forth all he hath in this most profitable usury? will he not, as those Hebrews did, *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that he hath in heaven a better and an enduring substance?*

He, who believeth, that in regard to any disgrace cast on him for his virtue, he shall be honoured by God, and crowned with heavenly glory, will he not in a manner be proud and ambitious of such disgrace; will he not, as the Apostles did, *rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ?*

He, who trusteth, that for a little pains taken in God's service, he shall receive *abundant wages*, far exceeding the merit of his labour, will he not cheerfully bear any toil or drudgery therein?

He who, with St. Paul, *computeth, that the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed; and that those light momentary afflictions do work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory*; will they not indeed be light unto him; will he not feel them lying on him, as a few straws or feathers?

He, who conceiveth our Lord's word true, that *by losing his life he shall find it*, or that death shall become to him a door into a happy immortality, would he not gladly upon such terms be killed *all the day long, and be always delivered unto death for Jesus?*

Rom. 8. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 10. Phil. 1. 29. Rom. 8. 36. 2 Cor. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 4. 9. Acts 20. 24. 21. 43.

He who by faith is assured, that any disasters befalling him, are not inflictions of wrath; but expressions of love toward him, by God in kindness dispensed as trials of his faith, as exercises of his virtue, as occasions of his acquiring more plentiful rewards, how can he be disgusted at them, or discomposed by them? why should he not rather accept them as favours, as felicities, with a thankful and joyful heart; *counting it*, as St. James adviseth, *all joy, when he falleth into divers temptations?*

In fine, it is Faith alone, which can plant in us that which is the root of all contentedness and all patience; a just indifference and unconcernedness about all things here: it alone can untack our minds and affections from this world, rearing our Souls from earth, and fixing them in heaven; for if we are persuaded, there is a state of life infinitely more desirable than the best condition here; if we believe there are things attainable by us, incomparably better than any which this world affordeth; in respect to which all these glories are but smoke, all these riches are but dirt, all these delights are but dreams, all these businesses are but triflings, all these substances are but shadows; how in our minds can we prize, how in our affections can we cleave unto these things? how then can we find in our hearts to spend upon them more care or pain than is needful?

He that taketh himself here to be out of his element, that he is but a *stranger, and sojourner upon earth*, that he hath here no abiding city, no country, no house, no land, no treasure, no considerable interest; but that he is merely wayfaring, in passage toward his true home, and heavenly country, the *Jerusalem above*, whereof he is a citizen, where his grand concerns do lie, where he hath reserv'd for him immovable possessions, and unvaluable treasures; where he is designed to enjoy most noble privileges, and most illustrious dignities in the Court of the great King; how can he have his heart here sticking in this earthy clay, entangled with the petty cares, amused with the sorry entertainments of this life? how can he otherwise than with St. Paul be dead, and crucified to this world? how can he withhold his mind from soaring thither in contemplation, and in affection dwelling there, whither his desires and hopes do all tend, where his joy and felicity are found, where the great objects of his esteem and love do reside?

But

But you will perhaps interpose, and say, these are indeed fine sayings, but where do such effects appear? who I pray doth practise according to these notions? where is that gallant to be found, who doth work so great exploits? where may we discern that height of piety, that tenderness of charity, that meek comportment with injuries and affronts, that clear sincerity, that depth of humility, that strictness of temperance, that perfect contentment, and undisturbed calmness of mind, that stoutness of courage, and stiffness of patience, which you talk of as the undoubted issues of faith? who is the man that with such glee doth hug afflictions, or biddeth adversity so welcome to his home? where dwell they, who so little regard this world, or so much affect the other? do we not see men run as if they were wild after preferment, wealth and pleasure? what do they else, but scrape, and scramble, and scuffle for these things? doth not every man moan the scantness of his lot, doth not every man flinch at any trouble, doth not every one with all his might strive to rid himself of any thing disagreeable to his sense or fancy? are not therefore such *encomiums* of Faith mere speculations, or brave *Rhodomontades* of Divinity?

tions, or brave Rhodomontades of Divinity?

The Objection I confess is a shrewd one, but I must reply to it: You say, where are such effects, where are such men? I ask then, where is Faith, where are Believers? shew me the one, and I will shew you the other: If such effects do not appear, 'tis no argument that Faith cannot produce them, but a sign, that Faith is wanting; as if a tree doth not put forth in due season, we conclude the root is dead; If a fountain yield no streams, we suppose it dried up: *Shew me* (saith St. James) *thy faith by thy works*; implying, that if good works do not shine forth in the conversation, 'tis suspicious there is no true faith in the heart: for such faith is not a feeble weening, or a notion swimming in the head, 'tis not a profession issuing from the mouth, 'tis not following such a garb, or adhering to such a party, but a persuasion fixed in the heart by good reason, by firm resolution, by lively sense; it is *with the heart*, as St. Paul saith, *man believeth unto righteousness*; that is the Faith we speak of, and to which we ascribe the production of so great and worthy effects: if a man wanteth that, attested by practice surable, though he know all the points exactly, though he readily will say Amen to every Article of the Creed, though he wear all the badges of a Christian, though he frequent the Congregations, and comply with the Forms of our Religion, yet is he really an Infidel: for is he not an Infidel, who denieth God? and is he not such a Renegado, who liveth implously? he is so in St. Paul's account; for *they profess* (saith he of such persons) *that they know God, but in works they deny him*; and *He is not a Jew*, saith the same Apostle (he is not a Christian, may we by parity of reason affirm) *who is one outwardly; but he is a Christian, who is one inwardly, and faith is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God*: we may attribute to a barren conceit, or to a formal profession, the name of Faith; but it is in an equivocal or wide sense, as a dead man is called a man, or a dry stick resting in the earth, a tree; for so Faith (saith St. James) *without works is dead*; is indeed but a trunk, or carcase of faith, resembling it in outward shape, but void of its spirit and life.

To our infidelity therefore, that overspreading vice, to the unsincerity, or deadness of our faith, the great defects of our practice are to be imputed; that is the grand source, from which impiety doth so overflow: that so few instances of sprightly vertue are visible, may be a sign the time is the same, or very like to that, of which our Lord saith, *When the son of man cometh, shall he indeed find Faith upon the Earth?*

But if such effects can now rarely be found, yet time hath been, when they were more rife, scarce any time hath been quite destitute of them; every Age since the foundation of things may have tokens and trophies to shew of faith's victorious efficacy; so many actions as there have been truly great and glorious, so many gallant feats have been achieved by Faith: If we survey the lives of the antient *Patriarchs*, of the *Prophets*, of the *Apostles*, of the *Martyrs* and *Confessors* of true Religion, their faith in all their works is most conspicuous.

Heb. 11. 4. *Faith recommended that excellent sacrifice of Abel to divine acceptance, and advanced him to the rank of first Martyr for piety.*
 On the wings of faith did *Enoch* mount to heaven, snatching the reward due to his faithful, and therefore *well-pleasing* obedience.

Faith preserved *Noah* from two mighty deluges, one of sin, the other of water, overflowing the earth; by it he stemmed the torrent of the one, and rode on the back of the other; it encouraged him to be a preacher of righteousness against the grain, and a practiser of it against the fashion of the world; not regarding the common hatred and envy which he did incur thereby; it moved him to undertake that great and strange work of building the Ark, for a sanctuary and seminary of mankind; the type of that spiritual vessel, by embarking into which through Faith we are saved from utter ruin.

Faith disposed *Abraham* to forsake his country and home, his estate, his kindred, following divine conduct *he knew not whither*; to wander abroad and sojourn among barbarous strangers: Faith inclined him at God's command, to sacrifice his only Son, a goodly youth, in the flower of his age and hopes, worthily most dear unto him; the Son of his old age, and the comfort thereof, given to him by miracle, and in special favour; the prop of his Family, and the heir of promise, by whom his seed was to be propagated, and his memory to flourish; him was he ready in obedience with his own hand to slay, quelling nature and his bowels, thwarting his own hopes, defying all semblances of contradiction or clashing between the commands and promises of God.

Faith, through the rudest efforts of envy and malice, through the dismal calamities of exile and slavery, through hideous snares of temptation, through villainous slanders, through loathsome prisons and fetters of iron, all along sustained with admirable moderation and presence of mind, did rear up *Joseph* to the helm of that great Kingdom.

The same inclined *Moses* to exchange the dignities and delights of a Court for a state of vagrancy and servility; it heartned him to outbrave the invincible obstinacy of a mighty Prince; it steeled him with patience to conduct, for the space of forty years, through a wild desert, a most perverse and mutinous herd of people.

Faith was mother of that renowned patience, which exhausted *Satan's* quiver, spent all his artillery, and wore out his invention in suggesting mischiefs; *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, was the rock, on which that unshakable patience of *Job* was founded.

That pricked the ruddy Stripling forward, naked and unarmed, with undaunted heart and countenance, to invade the Monster of *Gath*, that tower of flesh, swelling with rage and pride, and all fenced with brags and steel; *Thou comest to me*, said he, *with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield*; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts; there lay his confidence, thence sprung his admirable courage.

To this the bold attempts, and the glorious victories of *Joshua*, of *Gideon*, of *Barak*, of *Jephtha*, of *Sampson*, of *Jonathan*, of the *Maccabees*, are worthily ascribed, who with small forces, upon great disadvantages, did assault, did vanquish mighty Enemies, and Oppressors.

This enflamed the zeal of *Elias*, by which he alone did check and control the degenerate follies of his Nation, surmounting the indignation of Princes which favoured them; it fed him in the Wilderness by the purveyance of Ravens; it framed the wheels of that fiery Chariot, which transported him into heaven.

This made *Jeremy*, with like zeal and courage, dare to carry most unwelcome news and unpleasant messages to an outrageous people, not daunted by their angry menaces, or cruel misuses; his feet sunk into the mire, but faith bore up his heart above all discouragement.

This saved the conscience of those three brave Youths clear from that impiety, into which barbarous violence would have driven them; so that neither the fury of that Monarch, nor his gaping furnace, could terrify them into sin; faith putting into their mouths those manful words, *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter: If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O King; but if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden Image, which thou hast set up*; their faith carried them undaunted into the flames, and kept them untoucht within them; so that they became as gold, not wasted, but tried and purified in the furnace.

Neither

Neither could a danger no less terrible scare the noble *Daniel* from his devotions; his faith did stop the Lions mouths; and He (saith the Text) was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he trusted in his God.

Such exploits of spiritual prowess were achieved by an *Old-Testament-Faith*, relying upon God's attributes and providence; although wanting a clear revelation of the promises, which then lay wrapped up in mysteries and shadows; but more heroical acts of fortitude and patience did the bright sunshine of grace and glory upon the minds of our Apostles and primitive Saints produce; animated by faith, a little troop of them marched out with resolution to attack all the Powers of hell, and to beat down the Kingdom of darkness, to dispatch all the prejudices and errors of mankind, and to subdue the world to the obedience of Christ; so armed, successfully did they knock down and trample upon all opposition to their glorious designs; they defeated all the secular power and policy, they baffled all the wit, the learning, the eloquence, which stood in their way, or gave them resistance; they triumphed over persecutions, and in regard to all sufferings were more than conquerors; to forsake and forfeit all they had, was their gain; to have nothing was their wealth, to incur disgraces was their glory; to be in continual labour and travel was their ease; fastings, hunger and thirst were their pleasure, their feast, their luxury; prisons were chapels to them, in which they preached, and prayed, and sang praises to God; their joy was to suffer, to receive stripes, and undergo torments was their triumph and their glory; they constantly defied, they often courted death.

That they were able to perform such prodigious acts, and to endure things so insupportable, was not from a stupid insensibility of things, from a sturdiness of spirit, or stiffness of humour; but from a true magnanimity inspired by faith: Because they were persuaded of God's will, because they confided in God's help, because they relied on God's word; because they did expect rewards from God able to satisfy for all their pains and losses; this made them to undertake so bold enterprizes, and carried them with insuperable constancy through all; hence were they glad to abandon their ease and pleasure, to prostitute their honour and reputation, to part with their substance, to venture their safety, to sacrifice their lives for God's truth; Therefore do we both labour, and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, specially of those that believe, is the short account which St. Paul rendreth of it: And infallibly the like effects will Faith produce, wherever it is found, in a degree proportionable to its sincerity and strength.

A grain of Faith (our Saviour faith) is able to remove mountains; that is, to accomplish things in appearance very strange and difficult; and, To him that believeth all things are possible, saith the same mouth of truth; and He (saith our Lord again) that believeth in me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater works than those shall he do. If this be true in reference to works concerning the frame of nature, it is surely no less true in regard to those which lie within the more proper sphere of Faith, to moral and spiritual operations: If Faith can obtain the help of God, enabling to transfer a mountain, it also can procure his grace disposing to restrain an appetite, or repress a passion.

Now that which is it in self so worthy and lovely, which is attended with so good comforts, which is the daughter of so excellent causes, the sister of so great virtues, the parent of so admirable effects; how can it otherwise than be very precious, very laudable, very acceptable? how can we at all wonder that it should be graced with such commendations, and crowned with such rewards?

Let us therefore (to conclude) be exhorted, if we do want it, to endeavour the acquit of it by all proper means (by serious contemplation and study, by prayer to God, by voiding all obstructions of it): if we have it, to hold it fast, to cherish it, to improve it, as by all good ways, so especially by good practice; that we may produce the good fruits, and obtain the happy rewards thereof; through the mercies of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom for ever be all praise.

Now the God of all hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the holy Ghost. Amen.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON IV.

OF JUSTIFYING FAITH.

ROM. 5. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore; that word implies the text to be a conclusion (by way of inference, or of recapitulation) resulting from the precedent discourse; it is indeed the principal conclusion, which (as being supposed a peculiar and a grand part of the Christian doctrine, and deserving therefore a strong proof and clear vindication) St. Paul designed by several arguments to make good. Upon the words, being of such importance, I should so treat; as first to explain them, or to settle their true sense; then to make some practical application of the truths they contain.

As to the explicatory part, I should consider first, what the faith is, by which we are said to be justified; 2. what being justified doth import; 3. how by such faith we are so justified; 4. what the peace with God is, here adjoined to justification; 5. what relation the whole matter bears to our Lord Jesus Christ; or how through him being justified, we have peace with God; in the prosecution of which particulars it would appear, who the persons justified are, and who justifies us; with other circumstances incident.

I shall at this time only insist upon the first particular, concerning the notion of Faith proper to this place, in order to the resolution of which inquiry, I shall lay down some useful observations: and,

1. *First*, I observe, that *Faith*, or belief, in the vulgar acception, doth signify (as we have it briefly described in Aristotle's *Topicks*) a *ᾠδή ἐκ λόγων*, or *Top. 4. 5.* earnest opinion or persuasion of mind concerning the truth of some matter propounded. Such an opinion being produced by, or grounded upon some forcible reason (either immediate evidence of the matter, or sense and experience, or some strong argument of reason, or some credible testimony; for whatever we assent

*Aut proba esse qua credis; aut si
non probas, quomodo credis. Tertul.*
adv. Marc. V. 4.

unto,

"Οταν γὰρ πᾶς πισύῃ, καὶ γνώσει αὐτὸ ὅτι αἱ ἀρχαὶ ἐπιστάσαι. *Arist.*
Eth. 6. 3.

Ἀριστοτέλης τὸ ἐπὶ μὲν τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ αἱ ἀρχαὶ, τὸ δὲ τῇ πίστει ἰσχυροί. *Clem. Strom.* 2. p. 287.

Ἐπειὶ γὰρ πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τῷ ὅτι οἱ δόξαντες, ἢ ἑτέροις οἱς ἐπιστάσαι. *Arist.*
7. 3. (*Eth.*)

unto, and judge true upon any such grounds and inducements, we are commonly said to believe) this is the popular acception of the word; and according thereto I conceive it usually signifies in holy Scripture; which being not penn'd by Masters of humane art or science; nor directed to persons of more than ordinary capacities or improvements; doth not intend to use words otherwise than in the most plain and ordinary manner.

Belief therefore in general, I suppose, denotes a firm persuasion of mind concerning the truth of what is propounded; whether it be some one single proposition (as when *Abraham* believed, that *God was able to perform what he had promised*; and *Sarah*, that *God, who had promised was faithful*) or some system of propositions, as when we are said to believe *God's word* (that is all, which by his Prophets was in his name declared) to believe *the truth* (that is all the propositions taught in the true religion as so) to believe *God's commandments* (that is the doctrines in God's Law, to be true, and the precepts thereof to be good) to believe *the Gospel* (that is to be persuaded of the truth of all the propositions asserted, or declared in the Gospel.)

2. I observe *Secondly*, that whereas frequently some person, or single thing is represented (*verbo tenus*) as the object of faith, this doth not prejudice, or in effect alter the notion I mentioned; for it is only a figurative manner of speaking, whereby is always meant the being persuaded concerning the truth of some proposition (or propositions) relating to that person or thing: for otherwise it is unintelligible how any incomplex thing (as they speak) can be the complete, or immediate object of belief: beside simple apprehension (or framing the bare *Idea* of a thing) there is no operation of a man's mind terminated upon one single object; and belief of a thing surely implies more than a simple apprehension thereof: what it is, for instance, to believe this, or that proposition about a man, or a tree (that a man is such a kind of thing, that a tree hath this, or that property) is very easie to conceive; but the phrase believing a man, or a tree (taken properly, or excluding figures) is altogether insignificant, and unintelligible: indeed to believe (*πιστεύειν*) is the effect *τὸ πεπεισθαι* (of a persuasive argument,) and the result of ratiocination; whence in Scripture it is commended, or discommended, as implying a good or bad use of reason. The proper object of Faith is therefore some proposition deduced from others by discourse; as it is said, that *many of the Samaritans believed in Christ, because of the woman's word, who testified that He told her all that ever she did*; or as St. *Thomas* believed, *because he saw*; or as when it is said, that *many believed on our Lord's name, beholding the miracles which he did*, when then, for example, the *Jews* are required to believe *Moses* (or to believe in *Moses*, after the Hebrew manner of speaking) it is meant, to be persuaded of the truth of what he delivered, as proceeding from divine revelation; or to believe him to be what he professed himself, a messenger or prophet of God. So to believe *the Prophets*, or in the *Prophets*, (*πιστῆναι*) was to be persuaded concerning the truth of what they uttered in God's name (that the doctrines were true, the commands were to be obeyed, the threats and promises should be performed, the predictions should be accomplished: to believe all which the *Prophets* did say, as our *Saviour* speaks, *Acts* 24. 14. to believe all things written in the *Prophets*, as St. *Paul*.) So to believe *God's works* (a phrase we have in the *Psalms*) signifies, to be persuaded, that those works did proceed from God, or were the effects of his good providence: to believe in *man* (that which is so often prohibited, and dissuaded) denotes the being persuaded, that man in our need is able to relieve and succour us; lastly to believe in *God* (a duty so often enjoined, and inculcated) is to be persuaded, that God is true in whatever he says, faithful in performance of what he promises; perfectly wise, powerful and good; able and willing to do us good; the being persuaded, I say, of all these propositions, or such of them as fute the present circumstances and occasion, is to believe in God: thus, in fine, to believe on a person, or thing, is only a short expression (figuratively) denoting the being persuaded of the truth of some proposition relating, in one way or other, to that person or thing (which way is commonly discernible by considering

dering the nature, or state of such a person, or such a thing) the use of which Observation may afterward appear.

3. I observe *Thirdly*, that (as it is ordinary in like cases concerning the use of words) the word *belief* is by a kind of *synecdoche*, (or *metonymie* if you please) so commonly extended in signification, as together with such a persuasion as we spoke of to imply whatever by a kind of necessity (natural, or moral) doth result from it; so comprehending those acts of will, those affections of soul, and those deeds, which may be presumed consequent upon such a persuasion: for instance, when God commanded *Abraham* to forsake his country, promising him a happy establishment in the land of *Canaan*, with a perpetual blessing upon his posterity; *Abraham* was persuaded concerning the power, and fidelity of God; and concerning the truth of what was promised and foretold; in that persuasion his faith, according to the first, proper and restrained sense, did consist: but because from such a persuasion (being sincere, and strong enough) there did naturally, and duly result a satisfaction, or acquiescence in the matter enjoined as best to be done; a choice, and resolution to comply with God's appointment; an effectual obedience; a cheerful expectation of a good issue thereupon; therefore all those dispositions of soul, and actions concurring become expressed by the name of faith (that first persuasion being the Principle, and root of them:) for it is for his faith that he is highly commended; it is for it that he obtained so favourable an approbation and acceptance from God: Yet supposing *Abraham* to have had such a persuasion concerning God; and yet to have disliked what God required, or to have resolved against doing it, or to have indeed disobeyed, or to have disregarded the happy success; it is plain that *Abraham* as to the whole matter deserved rather much blame, than any commendation; and would not upon that account have had *righteousness imputed to him*, and have been called the friend of God: when therefore his faith is so magnified, that word comprehends not his bare persuasion only, but all those concomitants thereof, which if they had not gone along therewith, it had been a proof, that such a persuasion was not sincere (not *ἀντιπερὶ τὴν πίστιν*, an undissembled faith; such as *St. Paul* commends in *Timothy*) or not strong enough (not *ἀδιδουμένη πίστις*, an undoubting faith) but a weak, a small, a dead, an ineffectual faith; which come under blame, and reproof; but the effect shewed, that he did not (as *St. Paul* says) *ἀδιδουμένη τῇ πίστει*, had not a weak, or sickly faith; nor staggered at the promise of God; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; which he did not only in believing his word, but in suiting his affections, and yielding obedience thereto: (*πίστις ὑποτάσσου ἐκείνῳ*) by faith he obeyed, so as to forsake his country, says the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*; And Faith thus taken is not only a single act of a man's understanding, or will, but a complex of many dispositions and actions, diffused through divers faculties of a man, denoting the whole complication of good dispositions, and actions relating to one matter; which attend upon a true and earnest persuasion concerning it; right choice, submission and satisfaction of mind, firm resolution, dutiful obedience, constant and cheerful hope; or the like.

4. I observe more nearly to our purpose, *fourthly*, that the Faith here spoken of (being here, and elsewhere put absolutely, or by it self, without any adjunct of limitation or distinction) is often set down with terms annexed thereto, explaining and determining it; being sometimes styled the faith of *Christ*, of *Jesus*, of *God* (*τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τοῦ Θεοῦ*) sometimes faith upon *Christ* (*εἰς Χριστὸν*, and *ἐν Χριστῷ*) faith in *Christ* (*ἐν Χριστῷ*) faith to *Christ*, to the Lord, to God (*πιστεύω τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ κυρίῳ, τῷ Θεῷ*) faith upon the name of *Christ* (*εἰς ὄνομα*) faith of his name (*τῷ ὀνόματι*) faith to his name (*τῷ ὀνόματι*;) which phrases, all unquestionably denoting the same thing, do imply this faith to consist in being persuaded concerning the truth of some propositions chiefly relating to our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, either as grounded upon his Authority, or appertaining to his Person: Now what such propositions are we may learn from other expressions, descriptions, or circumlocutions declaring the nature and quality of this faith: it is sometimes called the belief of the Gospel, (that is of the whole system of doctrines, and laws, and pro-

Rom. 3. 3, 21, 26. Gal. 2. 16, 20. 3. 22.
Phil. 3. 9. Apoc. 2. 13. 14. 12.
eis, Act. 20. 21, 24, 25. 26. 18. Col. 2. 5, &c.
ἐν, Heb. 6. 1. Acts 9. 42. 22. 19, &c.
ἐν, Gal. 3. 26. 1 Tim. 3. 13. 2 Tim. 3.
15. Acts 13. 39, &c.
τῷ Χρ. Acts 5. 14. 16. 34. 18. 8. 27. 25.
John 5. 24. 10. 37, 38. 14. 11, &c.
εἰς ὄνομα, John 1. 12. 2. 23. 1 John 5.
13, &c. Acts 3. 16. τῷ.
1 John 1. 23. τῷ.

Mark 1. 15.
Phil. 1. 27.
1 Pet. 4. 17.
2 Thes. 2. 13.

* 1 Tim. 4. 3. mises, and prophecies taught, delivered, or declared by Christ, and his Apo-
 2. 4. Tit. 1. 1. stles, Repent, said St. John the Baptist, and believe the Gospel) the belief of the
 Heb. 10. 26. truth, (that body of truth, signally so called, which was taught by the same
 1 Tim. 2. 4. Authors) the acknowledgment of the same truth (* πῶς. & ἐπεγνωκὼς τὴν ἀλή-
 &c. θειαν are in St. Paul the same) equivalent to those descriptions of this faith
 a John 5. 47. are those expressions, which set it out by yielding assent (generally) to what
 48. our Lord Christ, and his Apostles taught, or to some chief points of their do-
 b John 12. 47.ctrine, inferring the rest; the ^a believing, ^b hearing, ^c receiving the word of God,
 c John 12. 48. of Christ, of the Apostles, ^d the receiving Christ's testimony, and (which is the
 17. 8. same) ^e receiving Christ himself; ^f coming unto Christ, (that is as disciples to their
 Acts 11. 1. Master, as servants to their Lord, as persons oppressed and enslaved to their De-
 d John 3. 33. liverer) ^g The believing (and knowing) that Jesus was sent by God, and came
 e John 1. 12. from him; ^h The believing, that Jesus was, what he professed himself to be;
 13. 20. 5. 43. the confessing, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; that Jesus is the Christ, the
 f John 6. 17. Son of God, He which should come into the world; the King of Israel; that God
 44. 65. 5. 20. raised him from the dead; by the belief of which one point, as involving the
 Matt. 11. 28. rest, St. Paul expresseth this faith: ⁱ If thou (saith he) shalt confess with thy
 g John 17. 8. mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart, that God raised him from
 5. 24. 6. 29. the dead, thou shalt be saved.
 h John 1. 12. John 4. 2. John 5. 1. 5. John 4. 42. John 1. 50. John 20. 31. Acts 8. 37. & Rom. 10. 9. ⁱ Ο ἀκούσας πᾶσι πατέρις καὶ μαρτύρ, John 6. 45.

The result upon considering all which expressions declaratory of the nature of this Faith (for this surely is not different from that, which is so commonly elsewhere represented in our Saviour's, and his Apostles discourses and writings, as a great duty required of us; as a virtue (or act of virtue) highly commendable, as an especial instrument of our salvation, as a necessary condition prerequisite to our partaking the benefits, and privileges by divine favour conferred on Christians) the result I say is this, that by this Faith (as to the first, and primary sense thereof) is understood the being truly and firmly persuaded in our minds, that Jesus was what he professed himself to be, and what the Apostles testified him to be; the *Messias*, by God designed, foretold and promised to be sent into the world, to redeem, govern, instruct and save mankind; our Redeemer and Saviour, our Lord and Master, our King and Judge; the Great high Priest, and Prophet of God; the being assured of these, and all other propositions connexed with these; or in short, the being thoroughly persuaded of the truth of that Gospel; which was revealed and taught by Jesus and his Apostles. That this notion is true, those descriptions of this faith, and phrases expressing it, do sufficiently shew; the nature and reason of the thing doth confirm the same; for that such a faith is, in its kind and order, apt and sufficient to promote God's design of saving us, to render us capable of God's favour; to purge our hearts, and work that change of mind, which is necessary in order to the obtaining God's favour, and enjoying happiness; to produce that obedience, which God requires of us, and without which we cannot be saved; these things are the natural results of such a persuasion concerning those truths; as natural, as the desire and pursuit of any good doth arise from the clear apprehension thereof, or as the shunning of any mischief doth follow from the like apprehension; as a persuasion that wealth is to be got thereby, makes the merchant to undergo the dangers and pains of a long voyage; (verifying that, *Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos, Per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes*) as the persuasion that health may thereby be recovered, engages a man not only to take down the most unfavoury potions, but to endure cuttings and burnings (*ut valeas ferrum patieris, & ignes*) as a persuasion, that refreshment is to be found in a place, doth effectually carry the hungry person thither: So a strong persuasion that Christian Religion is true, and the way of obtaining happiness, and of escaping misery, doth naturally produce a subjection of heart, and an obedience thereto; and accordingly we see the highest of those effects which the Gospel offers, or requires, are assigned to this faith, as results from it, or adjuncts thereof: Regeneration; *Who-soever*, saith St. John, *believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*; Spiritual union with God! *Who-soever shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth*

1 John 5. 1.

1 John 1. 12.

1 John 4. 5.

abideth in him, and he in God: if what ye have heard from the beginning abide in 1 John 2. 24.
you, ye shall also abide in the Father and the Son. The obtaining God's love; John 16. 27.
The father loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed, that I came 1st. 2 Thel.
from God; Victory over the world: Who is he, that overcometh the world, but 2. 13. Eph. 1.
he who believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? Freedom from spiritual slavery, 13. Acts 15. 7.
and becoming true disciples of Christ; If ye abide in my word, ye are truly my 9. 1 John 5. 5.
disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. Obtaining John 8. 31, 32.
everlasting life; He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me (that John 5. 24.
is, who believeth my word, which is indeed the word of God, who sent me,
and in whose name I speak) hath everlasting life. And, These things were John 20. 31.
written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that
believing it, you may have life in his name. Interest in God and Christ, He 2 Ep. John 9.
that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, He (ἐν τῷ) hath the Father and the Son. John 6. 47.
Verily verily, I say unto you, he that believeth upon me, hath eternal life. Ri- 3. 36. 15. 16.
sing with Christ (that is as to capacity and right:) Buried with him in Bap- Col. 2. 12.
tism, wherein you are risen with him through faith of the operation of God; who
raised him from the dead. Being saved; Whoever confesses with his mouth the Rom. 10. 9.
Lord Jesus to be the Son of God; and in his heart believes that God raised him
from the dead, shall be saved. Lastly being justified; for (St. Paul adjoins)
a man believeth (in the manner before mentioned) to righteousness; and with Rom. 10. 10.
the mouth confession is made to salvation. So we see, that the chief of those
excellent benefits, to the procuring of which faith (however understood) is
any-wise conducive, or requisite, do belong to the persuasion concerning E-
vangelical truths. We may also observe in the history concerning our Lord,
and his Apostles proceedings toward persons, whom they had converted to
Christianity, and did admit to a participation of the privileges thereof, that no
other faith was by them required in order thereto; upon such a persuasion ap-
pearing they received them into the Church, baptized them, pronounced unto
them an absolution from their sins, and a reception into God's favour: This
was the faith of Martha, which gave her interest in the promise of eternal life:
Every one (said our Saviour to her) living, and believing in me, shall never die: John 11. 26.
dost thou believe this? she saith unto him: Yes Lord, I have believed, that thou
art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world: this was the
faith, for which our Saviour commends St. Peter, and pronounces him hap- Matt. 16. 16,
py: Upon appearance of this faith St. Peter baptized and admitted into the 17.
Church the three thousand persons whom he had converted (Then, says the John 6. 69.
Text, they who gladly (or willingly) received his word (that is, were per- Οἱ ἀκούσαντες
suaded of the truth of that doctrine, which is before set down concerning our ἀποδεχόμενοι
Lord) were baptized; and the same day were added (to the Church) about 2. 41.
three thousand souls) Upon the like faith the Samaritans were baptized (ὅταν Acts 8. 12.
ἐπίστευσαν τῷ Φιλίππῳ, when they gave credence to Philip's doctrine:) and upon
the same account did the same Evangelist say it was lawful to baptize the Eu-
nuch, and accordingly did perform it: If, saith Philip, thou believest with thy Acts 8. 37, 38.
whole heart, it is lawful (or thou mayst be baptized) He answering said, I be-
lieve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; so he baptized him: This was the
faith, upon which St. Paul baptized Lydia, when she had yielded assent unto Acts 16. 14, 15,
(so προσέχειν doth import in the Acts; not only προσέχειν ὡς to yield attention,
but προσέχειν πρὸς to give assent unto) the things spoken by St. Paul; thus al-
so of those Jews in another place of the Acts, when St. Paul had opened, and Acts 17. 4.
alleged, out of the Scriptures, that Christ was to suffer, and to rise again from
the dead, and that Jesus was the Christ, it is said, τινες αὐτῷ ἐπεισθόσαν καὶ προ- Acts 17. 3, 4;
εἰσέθεντο, were persuaded, and consoled with Paul, and Silas (that is, were Acts 9. 20. 16.
received into Christian communion with them.) The same is intimated in o- 32. 17. 18, 12,
ther passages of the Apostolical history; by all which it appears, that the Apo-
stles method was to declare, and inculcate the main points of the Christian hi-
story and doctrine, attesting to the one, and proving the other by testimonies
and arguments proper to that purpose; and whoever of their hearers declared
himself persuaded of the truth of what they taught, that he did heartily assent
thereto, and resolved to profess and practise accordingly, him without more to
do, they presently baptized, and instated him in the privileges appertaining to
Christianity; or (in St. Paul's language) did justify them, according to their
subordi-

subordinate manner, as the ministers of God. And thus did the Primitive Church practise after the Apostles; as *Justin the Martyr* fully relates of it: — ὅσοι ἐν πεισθῶσι, καὶ πεπεισμένοι ἀληθῆς ταῦτα πρὸς ἡμῶν διδασκόμενα, καὶ λεγόμενα εἶναι, καὶ ποιῆσαι ὅτις διδάσκειται ὑποχρεῖται, &c. — ἀγορεύει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἵνα ὑμεῖς ἴσῃ καὶ τρέπον ἀναγεννησώμεθα, ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ ἀναγεννησόμεθα ἀναγεννῶνται — *Apol. 2. Whoever* (faith he) *are persuaded, and do believe these things by us taught, and said to be true, and undertake that they can live so according to them; — are brought thither, where water is, and are regenerated after the same manner as we have been regenerated.* I farther add, that even this faith is expressed to be the effect of divine grace, and inspiration; for, when *St. Peter* had confessed that

Matt. 16. 17. Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, our Saviour tells him, *That flesh and blood had not revealed that unto him, but his Father in heaven; and, No man* (St. Paul tells us) *can call Jesus Lord, but by the holy Ghost; And, Every Spirit, which confesseth Jesus Christ to have been come in the flesh, is of God* (faith *St. John*). So that even, this is a faith, in respect to which the holy Ghost is called *the spirit of faith*, which is the *fruit of the spirit*; and *the gift of God*; that which *no man can have without God's drawing him*; and teaching him; *2 Cor. 4. 13. No man can come unto me except the Father that hath sent me shall draw him* (ἐλκύσῃ αὐτόν.) *Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me: to which it is ordinarily required, that God should open the heart, as he did Lydia's heart, to attend, and assent unto what Saint Paul taught: Neither doth the Scripture (as I conceive) attribute any thing unto faith, which doth not agree to this notion.*

We might lastly adjoin, that this was the common, and current notion of Faith among the ancient Christians; neither do we, I suppose, meet with any other in their Writings; all which things do abundantly confirm the truth thereof.

5. But I must farther observe particularly (in correspondence to what was before more generally observed,) that this Faith doth not only denote precisely, and abstractedly such acts of mind, such opinions and persuasions concerning the truth of matters specified, but doth also connote, and imply (indeed comprehend according to the meaning of those, who use the word) such acts of will, as, supposing those persuasions to be real and complete, are naturally consequent upon them, and are in a manner necessarily coherent with them; a firm resolution

constantly to profess, and adhere unto the doctrine, of which a man is so persuaded; to obey all the laws and precepts, which it contains; forsaking in open profession, and in real practices all principles, rules, customs inconsistent with those doctrines and laws; that which is called *conversion*, or *returning to the Lord* (that is, leaving a course of rebellion, and disobedience to those laws, which the Lord in the Gospel commands, and resolvedly betaking themselves to the observance of them) πολλὴς τε ὄχλου πεισθῶσιν ἐπιστρέψαν ἐπὶ τῷ Κυρίῳ, *a great multitude* (it is said) *believing, did return unto the Lord*; their faith did carry with it such a conversion. Hence this faith is stiled *πειθαρχεῖν θεῷ* (to obey God's command,) *ὑπακούειν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ*, to obey the Gospel; *ὑπακούειν τῇ πίστει*, to obey the faith; *ὑποταγὴν δὲ ὁμολογίας εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*, (subjection of profession the gospel of Christ) with purpose of heart to adhere unto God; stipulation of a good conscience toward God (that which *St. Peter* intimates, as a necessary concomitant of baptism, it being a sincere undertaking, and engaging one's self to obey God's commandments) in fine, to *repent*; which is either adequately the same thing with faith, or included therein, according to the Apostolical meaning of the word; for that remission of sins, which is sometime made the consequent of faith, is other where expressly annex'd to repentance: The summ

Luke 24. 47. of the Gospel our Saviour himself expresses by the preaching in his Name repentance, and remission of sins in all nations: and Repent, (St. Peter preached,) and let every one of you be baptized: And, Repent, (said he again) and return, that your sins may be blotted out; and, Then to the Gentiles (say those in the Acts) *hath God given repentance unto life; which signifies the same with that other expression concerning the same persons, God's having purified their hearts by faith; in which places I take repentance to import the same thing with faith; being*

Salv. de provid. IV. 1. Cum hoc sit hominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christi mandata servare, fit absq; dubio, ut nec fidem habeat qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata conculcat, &c.

Acts 11. 21. Vid. Acts 9. 35. 14. 15. 26. 18. Acts 5. 32. 1 Thel. 1. 8. Rom. 1. 6. 6. 17. 16. 16. 2 Cor. 9. 13. Acts 11. 23. 1 Pet. 3. 21.

Luke 24. 47. Acts 2. 38. Acts 3. 19. 17. 30. Acts 11. 18. Acts 15. 9.

being in effect nothing else, but sincere embracing Christian Religion. Now the word *faith* is thus extended (beyond its natural and primary force) to comprehend such a compliance of will, or purpose of obedience, because this doth naturally arise from a persuasion concerning the truth of the Gospel, if it be real and strong enough, in that degree, which Christianity requires, and supposes to the effects mentioned in the Gospel; if it be *ἐκ τῆς καρδίας* in the heart (or a hearty faith) as St. Paul speaks; if it be such, as Philip exacts of the Eunuch, a *ἡ ἐκ τῆς ὅλης καρδίας*, from the whole heart; if it have that due plerophory, that stability, that solidity, which the Apostles speak of: for a weak, faint, slight, ill-grounded, ill-rooted opinion concerning the truth of the Gospel (such as those in another case had, whom our Saviour rebuked with a *τί δεῖσθαι ἐστὶν, ἀληθινόν;* why are ye fearful, O ye small in faith? such as St. Peter had, when our Saviour said to him, *ἀληθινὰ τὴν ἐπιστάς;* O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt? which faith could not keep them nor him from sinking; not such as those had, who heard the word, and gladly received it; but wanted root, so that, when persecution or affliction did arise for the word, they were presently scandalized; not such a faith as those many Rulers had, who are said to have believed in Jesus, but for fear of the Pharisees did not confess him; not such as Simon Magus had, who is said to have believed Philip, but to no good effect, because his heart was not right before God; he having not thoroughly resolved to obey the Gospel; not such as Agrippa had, whom St. Paul had almost persuaded to be a Christian) these sorts of faith are in comparison to that we speak of, but equivocally so called; it includes a firm resolution to perform carefully all the duties enjoined to Christians, to undergo patiently all the crosses incident to Christianity; it is the same with becoming a disciple of Christ, which a man cannot be without renouncing all other interests and concerns, without denying one's self, forsaking all and following him; without taking his yoke upon him, going after, and bearing his cross: it supposes (as our Saviour also teaches us) that a man hath cast up with himself the gain and loss he is like to receive by the bargain, and being satisfied therein, to contract *bonâ fide* with God; that a man hath weighed all the pains and dangers he shall be put upon by entering into this warfare, and so resolvedly to adventure upon it; it is productive of love to the truth, yea of love to God, and charity to men, without which all faith is unprofitable and ineffectual, as St. Paul teaches us. In short, this Faith is nothing else but a true, serious, resolute embracing Christianity; not only being persuaded that all the doctrines of Christ are true, but submitting to his will and command in all things.

Credere se in Christum quo modo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus facere precepit? Cypr. de Un. Ec.

But to prevent mistakes, and remove objections, I shall yet further observe, That this Faith hath, although not an adequate, yet a peculiar respect unto that part of Christian truth, which concerns the merciful intentions of God toward mankind, and the gracious performances of our Saviour in order to the accomplishing them; the promises of pardon to our sins, and restoral into God's favour upon the terms propounded in the Gospel, of sincere faith and repentance; whence the Gospel is called *ἀγγέλιον κατανάλωσης* (the word of reconciliation) and this is expressed as a summary of the Apostolick ministry or message; that God was in Christ reconciling the world, not imputing their sins. And, this our Saviour did order in especial manner to be preached in his name; this accordingly they did mainly propound and inculcate; that God had exalted Jesus to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins; that he should receive remission of sins, whoever did believe in his name; Let it be known unto you, brethren, that by this man remission of sins is *denounced unto you, (so did they preach.) Whence this faith is (signanter) called belief in the blood of Christ. Indeed of all Christian doctrines this is most proper first to be propounded and persuaded, as the most attractive to the belief of the rest; most encouraging and comfortable to men; most apt to procure glory to God by the illustration of his principal attributes; his justice and his goodness; most suitable to the state of things between God and man; for men being in a state of rebellion and enmity toward God, in order to their reducement and recovery thence it was most proper, that in the first place an overture of mercy and pardon should be made; an act of oblivion should be passed and propounded to them. Yet are not these propositions and promises the adequate or entire object of this faith; for other Articles

Acts 8. 37.
Rom. 10. 9.

ticles of faith are often propounded in a collateral order with those, yea sometimes (as in the case of the *Eunuch*) others are expressed, when that is not mentioned, but only understood: neither if any one should believe all the doctrines of that kind; if he did not withal believe that *Jesus* is his Lord, and shall be his Judge; that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, and a judgment to come, with the like fundamental verities of our Religion, would he be a believer in this sense.

Fides dicit, parata sunt magna & incomprehensibilia dona a Deo fidelibus suis: dicit spes mihi illa bona servantur, charitas dicit curro ego ad illa. Bern.

7. I observe farther, that this Faith doth relate only to propositions revealed by God (or at least deduced from principles of reason, such as are, that there is a God; that God is good, veracious and faithful; that our religion is true in the gross; that the holy Scriptures were written by divine

inspiration; which propositions we believe upon rational grounds and motives) not unto other propositions concerning particular matter of fact, subject to private conscience or experience; nor to any conclusions depending upon such propositions. For instance, it is a part of this faith to believe that God is merciful and gracious, that he bears good will unto, and is disposed to pardon every penitent sinner; or (which is all one) that supposing a man doth believe, and hath repented, God doth actually love him, and doth forgive his sins; this is, I say, indeed a part of the faith we speak of, its object being part of the Gospel revealed unto us: but the being persuaded that God doth love me, or hath pardoned my sins, or that I am in a state of favour with God, may, as my circumstances may be, not be my duty; however it is no part of this faith, but a matter of opinion, dependent upon private experience: For such a persuasion must be grounded upon my being conscious to my self of having truly and thoroughly repented (this being required by God, as a necessary condition toward my obtaining pardon and his favour) of having performed which duty I may presume, when it is false (and therefore cannot then be obliged to believe it) and may doubt, when it is true, and that not without good reason; considering the blindness and fallibility of man's mind, and that man's heart is deceitful above all things, as the Prophet tells us: upon which account then a man may not be obliged to have such a persuasion. It is indeed a great fault to doubt, or distrust, on that hand which concerns God; about his goodness, his truth, his wisdom, or power; but it is not

Jer. 17. 9.

Qui perseveraverit usque ad finem, hic salvus erit; quicquid ante finem fuerit, gradus est, quo ad fastigium salutis ascenditur, non terminus, quo jam culminis summa teneatur, &c. Cypr. de Unit. Eccl. p. 259.

always (perhaps not commonly) blameable to question a man's own qualifications, or his own performances, whether in kind or degree they be answerable to what God requires; that is inconsistent with true faith, but this not: We cannot have any good religious affections toward God, if we do not take him to be our gracious father; but we may have in us

such affections toward him, and he may be favourably disposed toward us, when

Luke 15. 19.

Matt. 8. 8, 10.

Matt. 9. 28.

Vid. Matt. 15.

27.

Rom. 4. 21. 11.

Heb. 11. 19.

πληροφορη-
σας.

Rom. 4. 20.

Col. 1. 23.

Heb. 7. 6.

1 John 3. 21.

1 Cor. 4. 4.

we suspect our selves to be untoward children, *unworthy* (as the *prodigal Son* in the Gospel confessed himself) *to be called the sons of God*; the *Centurion* in the Gospel did confess himself *unworthy that Christ should enter under his roof*; but he declared his persuasion, that if *Christ should only speak a word, his child should be healed*; and our Saviour thereupon professes, *that he had not found so much faith in Israel*: to the *blind men* imploring his relief our Saviour puts the question, *Do ye believe that I can do this?* they answered, *Yes, Lord*: he required no more of them; but said thereupon, *according to your faith let it be done unto you*. And that for which *Abraham* the Father of believers his faith is represented so acceptable, is, his firm persuasion concerning God's power; because (saith St. Paul) *he had a plerophory, that what was promised, God was able to perform*; by doing thus, he was a believer, and thereby gave glory to God (as the *Apostle* there adds) if we do not then distrust God, we may have faith, although we distrust our selves. It is true (generally and absolutely speaking) we should endeavour so fully and clearly to repent, and to perform whatever God requires of us, that we may thence acquire a good hope concerning our state; we should labour, that *our hearts may not condemn us* of any presumptuous transgressing our duty, and consequently that we may become in a manner confident of God's favour towards us: but when we have done the best we can, even when we are not conscious of any enormous fault or defect, yet we may consider with St. Paul, *that we are not thereby justified*, but abide liable to the more certain cognizance and judgment of God, who

seeth

seeth not as a man seeth; that we are not capable, or competent judges of our selves; nor are ever the better for thinking well of our selves; since (as St. Paul tells us again) *he is not approved that commends himself, but whom the Lord commendeth*: for that, *delicta sua quis intelligit? who can thoroughly understand and scann his own errors? who can say I have made my heart clean, I am purged of my sin?* who can know (if the Psalmist implieth that he could not) until God hath searched him and discovers it, *whether there be any secret way of wickedness in him*; whether he be sufficiently grieved for having offended God, fully humbled under the sense of his sins, thoroughly resolved to amend his life? however it often happens that true faith and sincere repentance are in degree very defective; in which case we may, without prejudicing the truth of our faith, suspect the worst, yea I conceive it is more safe and commendable so to do: if in any, then chiefly, I suppose, in this most important and critical affair, the Wise-man's sentence doth hold, *Blessed is he that feareth always*; so feareth, as thereby to become more solicitous and watchful over his heart and ways; more careful and studious of securing his salvation finally; to render his calling and election in the event more firm, and in his apprehension more hopeful. I dare say of two persons otherwise alike qualified, he that upon this ground (fearing his own unworthiness, or the defect of his performances) is most doubtful of his state, doth stand really upon better terms with God; as the *Pharisee, who justified himself*, and took himself to be in a very good condition, was indeed *less justified* (some- what the less for that conceit of his) than the poor *Publican, who was sensible of his own unworthiness*, and condemned himself in his own opinion: the great danger lies on that hand of being presumptuous, arrogant and self conceited, which God hates; and on this hand there usually lies humility, modesty and poverty of Spirit, which God loves. As *every high thing* (every elevation of mind) *is abominable in God's sight*; and he *depresseth him that exalteth himself*; so lowly thoughts are gracious in God's regard; *he raiseth him that humbleth himself, and is lowly in his own eyes*: he hath an especial respect to him, *that is of a poor and contrite heart, and trembleth at his word*. It is a property of good men (being such as often reflect upon their own hearts and ways, and thence discern the defects in them) with Jacob, to think themselves *less than the least of God's mercies*; with David to be *afraid of God's judgments*; it is their duty to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear, to *work out their salvation with fear and trembling*. I may add, that sometime a person much loving God, and much beloved of him, may be like a *Pelican in the wilderness, and an Owl of the desert*; from an apprehension of God's anger may have *no soundness in his flesh, nor rest in his bones by reason of his sin*; may have his spirit overwhelmed, and his heart within him desolate; may fear that his sins have separated between him and his God; and that he is forsaken of God; God hiding his face, and withdrawing his light of his countenance, he may be troubled; may have his soul cast down and disquieted within him; may be ready to say, *I am cut off from before thine eyes*; even such a man, in such a state of distress and doubt, may continue a believer; he retaining honourable thoughts of God (in which the worth and vertue of true faith consisteth) although dejected by the conscience of his own infirmities, by suspicion of his own indispositions, and consequently by the fear of God's displeasure.

Farther, that this Faith doth not essentially include a respect to such particular propositions, or does not (as many in these two latter ages have deemed and taught) consist in our being persuaded that our sins are pardon'd, or our persons just in God's esteem; that we are acceptable to God, and stand possessed of his favour, it appears from hence, that faith is in holy Scripture represented in nature precedaneous to God's benevolence (especial I mean, not general benevolence, for that prevents all acts and dispositions of us, or in us) to his conferring remission of sins, accepting and justifying our persons; it is a previous condition, without which (as the Apostle teaches us) *it is impossible to please God*; it is a reason of God's love (*The Father, saith our Lord, loves you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came from God*) it is a ground of divine

H

accep-

1 Sam. 16. 7.
2 Cor. 10. 18.
Psal. 19. 11.
Prov. 20. 9.
Psal. 139. 24.
Mt. 7. 23.
Rom. 11. 20.

Prov. 28. 14.
Nunquam est de salute propria mens
secura sapientia. Salv. ad Eccl. Cath.
lib. 2.
2. Pet. 1. 10.
Quem censeas digniorem, nisi emen-
datiorem; quem emendatiorem, nisi
timidiorem? Tertul. de Penit. 6.

Luke 16. 15.
18. 14.
2 Sam. 22. 28.
Psal. 34. 18.
Ecl. 66. 2.
57. 15.
Gen. 32. 10.
Pl. 119. 120.
Phil. 2. 12.
1. Pet. 1. 17.
2. Pet. 1. 10.
Pl. 102. 6.
38. 3.
143. 4.
Jer. 5. 25.
Matt. 27. 46.
Pl. 22. 1.
Pl. 30. 7. 89.
46. 42. 5. 69.
16. 31. 22.

Sed fide hoc beneficium accipiendum
est, quod credere nos oportet, quod pro-
pter Christum nobis donentur remissio
peccatorum & justificatio. Conf. Aug.
Quem justificamur fide, vult se in-
eri filium Dei sedentem ad dextram Pa-
tris, Mediatorem, interpellantem pro
nobis, & statuere, quod tibi remittan-
tur peccata; quod iustus, id est acce-
ptus reputetur. Melanct. Loc. com.
p. 418.

Heb. 11. 6.
John 16. 27.

James 2. 23. acceptation and good-will (*Abraham believed him, faith St. James, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God*) it is a mean, or instrument (so it is constantly represented) by which we are justified, obtain God's favour, and the remission of our sins; and therefore is in order of nature previous and prerequisite thereto; it is therefore required before baptism, in which remission of sins is consigned: God justifies, accepts and pardons him, that hath been impious, but not him that is an infidel: This is the method plainly declared in Scripture; wherefore if faith implies a persuasion that God hath remitted our sins, it must imply an antecedent faith (even a justifying faith, antecedent to it self,) or that we believe before we believe, and are justified before we are justified. I add, that by this notion many, or most (I will not after the Council of Trent say all) humble and modest Christians are excluded from being believers; even all those who are not confident of their own sincerity and sanctity, and consequently cannot be assured of their standing in God's favour: and on the other side, the most presumptuous and fanatical sort of people are most certainly the truest and strongest believers, as most partaking of the most essential property thereof, according to that notion; for of all men living such are wont to be most assured of God's special love unto them, and confident that their sins are pardoned; Experience sufficiently shews this to be true, and consequently that such a notion of Faith cannot be good.

Calv. Inst. Lib. 7. 5. 7, & 28. compar. Nunc iusta fidei definitio nobis constabit, si dicamus esse divina erga nos benevolentia firmam, certamque cognitionem, &c.

Jam in divina benevolentia quam respicere dicitur fides, intelligimus salutis ac vite aeterna possessionem obtineri &c. — firmus assensus — quo certa fiducia in Deo acquiescens firmiter unusquisque fidelis statuit, non solum promissum esse credentibus in genere remissionem peccatorum, sed sibi in particulari concessum, aeternamque justitiam, &c. ex ea vitam, &c.

Much less is that notion of faith right, which defines faith to be a firm and certain knowledge of God's eternal good-will toward us particularly, and that we shall be saved; which notion (taught in the beginning of the Reformation by a man of greatest name and authority) was thus lately expressed by the Professors of Leyden in their *Synopsis purioris Theologiae*: Faith (they say, in their definition thereof) is a firm assent — by which every believer with a certain trust resting in God, is persuaded not only that remission of sins is in general promised to them who believe, but is granted to himself particularly, and eternal righteousness, and from it life, by the mercy of God, &c. which notion seems to be very uncomfortable,

as rejecting every man from the company of believers, who is either ignorant or doubtful, not only concerning his present, but his final state; who hath not, not only a good opinion, but a certain knowledge of his present sincerity and sanctity; yea not only of this, but of his future constant perseverance therein; so that if a man be not sure he hath repented, he is (according to this notion) sure that he hath not repented, and is no believer: how many good people must this doctrine discourage and perplex? To remove it, we may consider, 1. that it altogether inverts and confounds the order of things declared in Scripture, wherein Faith (as we observed before) is set before obtaining God's good-will, as a prerequisite condition thereto; and is made a means of salvation (*without faith it is impossible to please God; By grace we are saved, through faith.*) And if we must believe before God loves us, (with such a love as we speak of) and before we can be saved; then must we know that we believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved; and consequently we must indeed believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved. But this doctrine makes the knowledge of God's love and of salvation in nature antecedent to faith, as being an essential ingredient into it; which is preposterous: Consider this circle of discourse: A man cannot know that he believes, without he does believe (this is certain) a man cannot know that he shall be saved, without knowing he doth believe (this is also certain, for upon what ground, from what evidence can he know his salvation, but by knowing his faith.) But again backward, A man (say they) cannot believe (and consequently not know that he believes) without being assured of his salvation: What an inextricable maze and confusion is here? this doctrine indeed doth make the knowledge of a future event to be the cause of its being future; it supposes God to become our friend (as *Abraham* was by his faith) by our knowing that he is our friend; it makes us to obtain a reward by knowing that we shall obtain it; it supposes the assurance of our coming to a journey's end to be the way of getting thither; which who can

Heb. 11. 6.
Eph. 2. 8.
Rom. 10. 9.

James 2. 23.

con-

conceive intelligible, or true? Our Saviour doth indeed tell us, that it is *the way to life everlasting* (or conducive to the attaining it) *to know* (that is, to believe, as it is interpreted in the 8th verse of that chapter; for what upon good grounds we are persuaded of, or judge true, we may be said to know) *the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent*; but he doth not say it is life everlasting (or conducive to the obtaining it) to know, that we shall have life everlasting: that were somewhat strange to say. St. Peter exhorts ^{2 Pet. 1. 10.} us to *use diligence to make our calling and election sure* (or firm, and stable) but he doth not bid us know it to be sure; if we did know it to be so, what need should we have to make it so; yea how could we make it so? he doth not injoin us to be sure of it in our opinion, but to secure it in the event by sincere obedience, and a holy life; by so impressing this persuasion upon our minds, so rooting the love of God and his truth in our hearts, that no temptation may be able to subvert our faith, or to pluck out our charity.

2. This notion plainly supposes the truth of that doctrine, that no man being once in God's favour can ever quite lose it; the truth of which I shall not contest now (nor alledge the many clear passages of Scripture, nor the whole tenour of the Gospel, nor the unanimous consent of all Christendom for fifteen hundred years against it) but shall only take notice, that their notion of faith necessarily presupposing the truth of this doctrine is yet thereby everted: for it follows thence, that no man, who doth not assent to that doctrine, is, or can be a believer: for he that is not assured of the truth of that opinion (although we suppose him assured of his present sincerity, and being in a state of grace) cannot know that he shall be saved: So that only such as agree with them in that opinion can be believers, which is somewhat hard, or rather very absurd; and to aggravate this inconvenience I adjoin; 3. that according to their notion scarce any man (except some have had an especial revelation concerning their salvation) before the late alterations in Christendom, was a believer; for before that time it hardly appears, that any man did believe, as they do, that a man cannot fall from grace; and therefore scarce any man could be assured, that he should be saved; and therefore scarce any man could be a believer in their sense.

St. Augustine himself (whose supposed patronage stands them in so much ^{De Corr. & stead upon other occasions}) hath often affirmed, that divers have had given ^{gr. cap. 9 & 13.} them that faith, that charity, that justification, wherein if they had died, they ^{De bon. pers. cap. 8. 13.} should have been saved; who yet were not saved: which persons surely, when they were in that good state, (admitting them according to St. Augustine's supposal to have been in it) were as capable of knowing their salvation, as any other man can be, yea St. Augustine himself (considering that *Accidere cuiquam quod potest, cuius potest*, what was another man's case might be his, there being no ground of difference) could not be more sure of his own salvation at any time, than such persons were at that time: According to St. Augustine's judgment therefore no man could know that he should be saved (his salvation depending upon perseverance, which in his opinion not being given to all, must as to our knowledge (whatever it might be in respect to God's decree) be contingent and uncertain) it follows I say upon his suppositions, yea he expressly affirms it; (*lib. 2. de bono pers.*) *Itaq; (says he) utrum quisq; hoc (perseverantia) munus acceperit, quamdiu hanc vitam ducit, incertum est: Whether any have received this gift of perseverance while he leads this life is uncertain.* Wherefore St. Augustine could not be assured of his own salvation; and therefore (according to these mens sense) he was no believer, no Christian; which I suppose yet they will not assert, though it be so plainly consequent on their own position. I might, 4. ask of them, if a man should confess ingenuously, that although he did hope for mercy from God in that day, yet that he was not assured of his salvation, whether such a person should be rejected from Christian communion, as no believer: It seems, according to their notion of faith, he should; since by his own (in this particular infallible) judgment it is notorious that he (as being no believer) hath no title unto, or interest in the privileges of Christianity; but this proceeding would very much depopulate the

—nec sibi quisq; ita notus est, ut sit de sua crassima conversatione securus. Aug. Ep. 121. ad Probam.
In hoc mundo, & in hac vita nulla anima possit esse securo. Ibid.
Quamdiu vivimus, in certamine sumus, & quamdiu in certamine nulla certa est victoria. Hier. adv. Palag. 2. 2.

Church, and banish from it, I fear, the best, (the most humble and modest, yea the wisest and soberest) members thereof.

But so much I think suffices for the removal of that new harsh notion, to say no worse of it.

*Vid. Amel.
Med. lib. 1.
cap. 27.
Christus ad-
quatum objectum.
Amel.*

There is another more new than that, devised by some (who perceived the inconveniences of the former notions; yet it seems did affect to substitute some new fine one in their room) which if it be not so plainly false, yet is (it seems) more obscure and intricate: it is this; that Faith is not an assent to propositions of any kind, but a recumbency, leaning, resting, rolling upon, adherency to (for they express themselves in these several terms, and others like them) the person of Christ; or, an apprehending and applying to our selves the righteousness of Christ; his person it self, and his righteousness, as simple incomplex things; not any proposition (that they expressly caution against) are the objects, say they, of our faith: they compare our faith to a hand that lays hold upon Christ, and applies his righteousness; and to an eye that looks upon him, and makes him present to us; and by looking on him (as on the brazen Serpent) cures us: but this notion is so intricate, these phrases are so unintelligible, that I scarce believe the devisers of them did themselves know what they meant by them; I do not, I am sure: for what it is for one body to lean upon, or to be rolled on another; what for one body to reach at, and lay hold upon another; what it is to apply a garment to one's body, or a salve to one's wounds, I can easily understand; but what it is for a man's mind to lean upon a person (otherwise than by assenting unto some proposition he speaks, or relying upon some promise he makes) to apply a thing, otherwise than by consenting to some proposition concerning that thing, I cannot apprehend, or reach, there is not (as we noted before) any faculty or operation of a man's mind, which answers the intent of such notions or phrases. Let me put this case: suppose a great Province had generally revolted from its Sovereign, whereby the People thereof had all deserved extreme punishment suitable to such an offence; but that the King moved with pity, and upon the intercession of his only beloved Son (together with a satisfaction offered and performed by him) should resolve to grant a general pardon to them, upon just, and fit, and withal, very easie terms; And that for the execution of this gracious purpose toward them, he should depute and send his Son himself among them to treat with them, by him declaring his merciful intentions toward them, with the conditions, upon compliance wherewith, all, or any of them should be pardon'd their offence, and received into favour; those conditions being, suppose it, that first they should receive and acknowledge his Son for such as he professed himself to be (the King's Son indeed, who truly brought such a message unto them from his Majesty) then that they should seriously resolve with themselves, and solemnly engage to return unto their due allegiance; undertaking faithfully for ever after to observe those laws, which the said Prince in his Father's name should propound unto them. Suppose farther, that the Prince in pursuance of this commission and design, being come into the Country, should there send all about Officers of his, injoining them to discover the intent of his coming, what he offered, and upon what terms; withal, empowering them in his name to receive those, who complied, into favour, declaring them pardoned of all their Offences, and restored to the benefit of the King's protection, and all the privileges of loyal subjects; suppose now, that these Officers should go to the people, and speak to them in this manner: The King makes an overture of pardon and favour unto you upon condition, that any one of you will recumbe, rest, lean upon, or roll himself upon the person of his Son (rest upon his person, not only rely upon his word, that you are to understand) or in case you will lay hold upon, and apply to your selves his Son's righteousness, by which he hath procured of the King his Father, this mercy and favour for you (not only being persuaded that he hath performed thus much for you, this is not enough) do you think these messengers should thus well express themselves, or perform their message handsomely and with advantage? Should not they do much better, laying aside such words of metaphor and mystery, to speak in plain language; telling them, that their King his Son (by plain characters discernable to be truly such) was come among them upon such an intention;

tention; that if they would acknowledge him, and undertake thereafter to obey him, they should receive a full pardon, with divers other great favours and advantages thereby? the case is apparently so like to that which stands between God and man, and doth so fully resemble the nature of the Evangelical dispensation, that I need not make any application, or use any more argument to refute that notion; I shall only say that I conceive these new phrases (for such they are) not known to ancient Christians, not delivered, either in terms, or sense in Scripture, for the places alledged in favour or proof of them by *A-mes*, one of the first broachers of them, (all we may presume that they could find any-wise seeming to favour their notion) do not, as, if time would permit, might easily be shewed, import any such thing, (but are strangely misapplied) that I say these phrases do much obscure the nature of this great duty, and make the state of things in the Gospel, more difficult and dark than it truly is; and thereby seem to be of bad consequence, being apt to beget in people both dangerous presumptions and sad perplexities: for they hearing that they are only, or mainly bound to have such a recumbency upon Christ, or to make such an application of his righteousness, they begin (accordingly as they take themselves to be directed) to work their minds to it; and when they have hit upon that posture of fancy, which they guess to suit their Teachers meaning, then they become satisfied, and conceit they believe well, although perhaps they be ignorant of the principles of the Christian faith, and indisposed to obey the precepts of our Lord: sometimes, on the other side, although they well understand, and are persuaded concerning the truth of all necessary Christian doctrines, and are well disposed to observe God's commandments, yet because they cannot tell whether they apprehend Christ's person dexterously, or apply to themselves his righteousness in the right manner, as is prescribed to them (of which it is no wonder that they should doubt, since it is so hard to know what the doing so means) they become disturbed and perplexed in their minds; questioning whether they do believe or no: Thus by these notions (or phrases rather) are some men tempted fondly to presume, and other good people are wofully discouraged by them; both being thence diverted, or withdrawn from their duty: whereas what it is to believe, as Christians anciently did understand it, and as we have assayed to explain it, is very easie to conceive; and the taking it so, can have no other than very good influence upon practice, as both reason (as we have insinuated) shews, and the Scripture largely and plainly affirms. But let thus much suffice for the enquiry concerning the genuine nature and notion of Faith proper to this place (that faith by which in this Text we are said to be Justified) the other particulars I cannot so much as touch upon at this time.

I end with those good prayers of our Church:

*O Lord, from whom all good things do come, Grant to us thy humble servants, Fifth Sunday
that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good; and by after Easter.
thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.*

*Almighty and Everlasting Lord, give unto us the increase of faith, hope and 14th Sunday
charity, and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to after Trinity.
love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

F

I Beliebe, &c.

SERMON V.

OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

ROM. V. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

IN order to the understanding of these words, I did formerly propound divers particulars to be considered and discussed: the *first* was, What that Faith is, by which Christians are said to be justified? This I have dispatched: The *next* is, What Justification doth import? the which I shall now endeavour to explain; and I am concerned to perform it with the more care and diligence, because the right notion of this term hath in latter times been canvassed with so much vehemence of dissension and strife.

*Neel as
Noy. Naz.*

In former times, among the *Fathers* and the *School-men*, there doth not appear to have been any difference or debate about it; because (as it seems) men commonly having the same apprehensions about the matters, to which the word is applicable, did not so much examine or regard the strict propriety of expression concerning them: consenting in *things*, they did not fall to cavil and contend about the exact meaning of *words*. They did indeed consider distinctly no such point of doctrine as that of *Justification*, looking upon that *word* as used incidentally in some places of Scripture, for expression of points more clearly expressed in other terms; wherefore they do not make much of the *word*, as some *Divines* now do.

*Articulus
stantis Ecclē-
siae. Luth.*

But in the beginning of the Reformation, when the discovery of some great errors (from the corruption and ignorance of former times) crept into vogue, rendred all things the subjects of contention, and multiplied controversies, there did arise hot disputes about this point; and the right stating thereof seemed a matter of great importance; nor scarce was any controversy prosecuted with greater zeal and earnestness: whereas yet (so far as I can discern) about the real points of doctrine, whereto this *word* (according to any sense pretended) may relate, there

there hardly doth appear any material difference; and all the Questions depending, chiefly seem to consist about the manner of expressing things, which all agree in; or about the extent of the signification of words capable of larger or stricter acceptation: whence the debates about this point, among all sober and intelligent persons, might (as I conceive) easily be resolved or appeased, if men had a mind to agree, and did not love to wrangle; if at least a consent in believing the same things, although under some difference of expression, would content them, so as to forbear strife.

To make good which observation, tending as well to the illustration of the whole matter, as to the stating and decision of the controversies about it, let us consider the several divine acts, to which the term Justification is, according to any sense pretended, applicable: I say divine acts; for that the Justification we treat of is an act of God simple or compound (in some manner) respecting, or terminated upon man, is evident, and will not I suppose be contested; the words of St. Paul in several places so clearly declaring it; as in that, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth*, and in that, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*. Now according to the tenour of Christian doctrine such acts are these.

1. God (in regard to the obedience performed to his will by his beloved Son, and to his intercession) is so reconciled to mankind, that unto every person, who doth sincerely believe the Gospel, and (repenting of his former bad life) doth seriously resolve thereafter to live according to it, he doth (upon the solemn obligation of that faith, and profession of that resolution in baptism) entirely remit all past offences, accepting his person, receiving him into favour; assuming him into the state of a loyal subject, a faithful servant, a dutiful Son; and bestowing on him all the benefits and privileges suitable to such a state; according to those passages: *It behoved Christ to suffer—and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and, To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins; and, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins; and in other places innumerable.*

2. As any person persisting in that sincere faith, and serious purpose of obedience, doth assuredly continue in that state of grace, and exemption from the guilt of sin; so in case that out of humane frailty such a person doth fall into the commission of sin, God (in regard to the same performances and intercessions of his Son) doth upon the confession and repentance of such a person remit his sin, and retain him in or restore him to favour; according to those sayings of St. John: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; and, If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.*

3. To each person sincerely embracing the Gospel, and continuing in steadfast adherence thereto, God doth afford his holy Spirit, as a principle productive of all inward sanctity and vertuous dispositions in his heart, enabling also and quickning him to discharge the conditions of faith and obedience required from him, and undertaken by him; that which is by some termed making a person just, infusion into his Soul of righteousness, of grace, of vertuous habits; in the Scripture style it is called *acting by the Spirit, bestowing the gift of the holy Ghost, renovation of the holy Ghost, creation to good works, sanctification by the Spirit, &c.* which phrases denote partly the collation of a principle enabling to perform good works, partly the design of religion tending to that performance.

Now all these acts (as by the general consent of Christians, and according to the sense of the antient Catholick Church, so) by all considerable Parties seeming to dissent, and so earnestly disputing about the Point of Justification, are acknowledged and ascribed unto God; but with which of them the act of Justification is solely or chiefly coincident; whether it signifieth barely some one of them, or extendeth to more of them, or comprehendeth them all (according to the constant meaning of the word in Scripture) are questions coming under debate, and so eagerly prosecuted: Of which questions whatever the true resolution be, it cannot

cannot methinks be of so great consequence, as to cause any great anger or animosity in dissenters one toward another, seeing they all conspire in avowing the acts, whatever they be, meant by the word *Justification*, altho' in other terms; seeing all the dispute is about the precise and adequate notion of the word *Justification*: whence those questions might well be waved as unnecessary grounds of contention; and it might suffice to understand the points of doctrine which it relateth to in other terms, laying that aside as ambiguous and litigious. Yet because the understanding the rightest, or most probable notion of the word, may somewhat conduce to the interpretation of the Scriptures, and to clearing the matters couched in it, somewhat also to the satisfaction of persons considerate and peaceable, I shall employ some care faithfully (without partiality to any side) to search it out, and declare it: in order whereto I shall propound some Observations, seeming material.

Verba valent
ut nummi.

I. Whereas it were not hard to speak much, and criticise about the primitive sense of the word, and about its various acceptions both in holy Scripture and other Writings, I do question whether doing that would be pertinent, or conducive to our purpose of understanding its right notion here: for knowing the primitive sense of words can seldom or never determine their meaning any where, they often in common use declining from it; and the knowing variety of acceptions doth at most yield only the advantage of chusing one suitable to the subject matter and occasion. We are not therefore to learn the sense of this word from mere *Grammarians*.

Edmalasav,
avri to d'inar
or knovav.
Balt. in Syn.
Chalced.
Cath. 1:

II. The sense of this word is not to be searched in extraneous Writers; both because no matter like that we treat upon did ever come into their use or consideration, and because they do seldom or never use the word in a sense any-wise congruous to this matter: in them most commonly the word *δικαιο* doth signify (as the like word *αἰσίο*) to deem a thing just, equal, or fit (or simply to deem about a thing.) Sometimes also (yet not often, as I take it) being applied to an action, or cause, it importeth to make it appear lawful, or just, as when we ordinarily say to justify what one saith or doeth; (whence *δικαίωσις* in Aristotle is an argument proving the justice of a cause, *firmamentum causæ*) but in them very seldom or never it is applied to persons; and an example, I conceive, can hardly be produced, wherein it is so used.

2 Sam. 15. 4.

Pl. 82. 3.

III. In the Sacred Writings at large it is commonly applied to persons, and that according to various senses, some more wide and general, some more restrained and particular. It there sometime denoteth generally to exercise any judicial act upon, in regard unto, or in behalf of a person; to do him right, or justice, in declaring the merit of his cause, or pronouncing sentence about him; in acquitting or condemning him for any cause, in obliging him to or exempting him from any burthen, in dispensing to him any reward or punishment, indifferently: thus *Abraham* said, *O that I were made a judge in the Land, that every man, which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would justify him*, that is, *I would do him right*: and, in the 82d Psalm, this charge is given to the Princes, or Judges; *Defend the poor, and fatherless, justify the poor and needy*; that is, *do right and justice to them*.

Deut. 25. 1.

1 Kings 8. 32.

2 Chr. 6. 23.

Prov. 17. 15.

Matt. 12. 37.

(Ez. 5. 23.

43. 9.)

But more particularly the word signifieth (and that according to the most usual and current acception) so to do a man right, as to pronounce sentence in his favour, as to acquit him from guilt, to excuse him from burthen, to free him from punishment; whence we most often meet with the word placed in direct opposition to that of condemnation: as in that law, *If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the Judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked*: And in Solomon's prayer, *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness*: and in the Proverbs, *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even both are an abomination unto the Lord*: And, in the Gospel, our Saviour saith, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*.

In consequence upon this sense, and with a little deflection from it, to justify a person sometime denoteth to approve him, or esteem him just, a mental judgment, as it were, being passed upon him; so *wisdom* is said to be justified, that is,

is, approved by her children: So in the Gospel some persons are said to justify themselves, that is, to conceit themselves righteous: and the Publican went home justified rather than the Pharisee, that is, more approved and accepted by God: So also it is said, that All the people and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with John's baptism; they justified God, that is, they declared their approbation of God's proceeding, in the mission of John.

In like manner, Justification is taken for exemption from burthens; as where in the Acts St. Paul saith, And from all things, from which by the law of Moses ye could not be justified, in this is every one that believeth justified.

It may also sometimes be taken for deliverance from punishment; as where in the Law God saith, The innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the wicked; that is, not let him escape without impunity; according to that in the Proverbs, Tho' hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished.

IV. We may observe, that (as every man hath some phrases and particular forms of speech in which he delighteth, so) this term is somewhat peculiar to St. Paul, and hardly by the other Apostles applied to that matter, which he expresseth thereby: they usually in their Sermons, and Epistles, do speak the same thing (whatever it be) in other terms, more immediately expressive of the matter. St. James indeed doth use it, but not so much, it seemeth, according to his usual manner of speech, as occasionally; to refute the false and pestilent conceits of some persons, who mistaking St. Paul's expressions and doctrine, did pervert them to the maintenance of Solifidian, Eunomian and Antinomian positions, greatly prejudicial to good practice. And seeing the term is so proper to St. Paul in relation to this matter, the right sense and notion thereof seemeth best derivable from considering the nature of the subject he treateth on, observing the drift of his discourse and manner of his reasoning, comparing the other phrases he useth equivalent to this, and interpretative of his meaning.

V. Following this method of enquiry, I do observe and affirm that the last notion of the word, as it is evidently most usual in the Scripture, so it best suiteth to the meaning of St. Paul here, and elsewhere commonly, where he treateth upon the same matters; that God's justifying solely, or chiefly, doth import his acquitting us from guilt, condemnation and punishment; by free pardon and remission of our sins, accounting us and dealing with us as just persons, upright and innocent in his sight and esteem: the truth of which notion I shall by divers arguments and considerations make good.

I. This sense doth best agree to the nature of the subject matter, and to the design of St. Paul's discourse; which I take to be this, the asserting the necessity, reasonableness, sufficiency and excellency of the Christian dispensation in order to that, which is the end of all Religion, the bringing men to happiness, and consequently to the rendering men acceptable to God Almighty, who is the sole Author and donour of happiness; this is that, which in general he aimeth to assert and maintain.

This, I say, is that which he chiefly driveth at, to maintain, that it is not unreasonable that God should so proceed with men (whose good and felicity, as their gracious Maker, he greatly tendreth) as the Christian Gospel declareth him to do, but that rather such proceeding was necessary and fit, in order to our salvation; and withall conformable to the ordinary method of God's proceedings toward the same purpose.

Now God's proceeding with man according to the Gospel, the general tenour thereof doth set out to be this; that God, out of his infinite goodness and mercy, in consideration of what his beloved Son, our blessed Lord, hath performed and suffered, in obedience to his will, and for the redemption of mankind (which by transgression of his laws, and defaultance in duty toward him, had grievously offended him and fallen from his favour, was involved in guilt, and stood obnoxious to punishment) is become reconciled to them (passing by, and fully pardoning all offences by them committed against him) so as generally to proffer mercy upon certain reasonable and gentle terms, to all that shall sincerely embrace such overtures of mercy, and heartily resolve to comply with those terms required by him; namely, the returning and adhering

to him, forsaking all impiety and iniquity, constantly persisting in faithful obedience to his holy commandments: this, I say, is the proceeding of God, which the Christian Gospel doth especially hold forth, and which, according to our Lord's commission and command, the Apostles did first preach to men; as whosoever will consider the drift and tenour of their preaching, will easily discern; which therefore St. Paul may reasonably be supposed here to assert and vindicate against the Jews, and other Adversaries of the Gospel; consequently the terms he useth should be so interpreted as to express that matter; whence being justified, will imply that which a person embracing the Gospel doth immediately receive from God, in that way of grace and mercy, viz. an absolution from his former crimes, an acquittance from his debts, a state of innocence and guiltlessness in God's sight, an exemption from vengeance and punishment; all that which by him sometimes, and by the other Apostles, is couched under the phrases of *remission of sins*, having sins *blotted out* and *washed away*, being *cleansed from sin*; and the like: Thus considering the nature of the matter, and design of his discourse, would incline us to understand this word.

2. Again, the manner of his prosecuting his discourse, and the arguments by which he inferreth his conclusions concerning the Gospel, do confirm this notion. He discourseth, and proveth at large, that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, were *shut up under sin*, that *all had sinned*, and *did fall short of the glory of God* (that is, of rendring him his due glory by dutiful obedience) that *every mouth was stopped*, having nothing to say in defence of their transgressions, and that *all the world stood obnoxious to the severity of God's judgments*; that not only the light of nature was insufficient to preserve men from offending inexcusably, even according to the verdict of their own consciences, but that the written Law of God had (to manifold experience) proved ineffectual to that purpose, serving rather to *work wrath* to bring men under a curse, to aggravate their guilt, to convince them of their sinfulness, to discourage and perplex them; upon which general state of men (so implicated in guilt, so liable to wrath) is consequent a necessity either of condemnation and punishment, or of mercy and pardon.

He doth also imply (that which in the *Epistle to the Galatians*, where he prosecuteth the same argument, is more expressly delivered) that no precedent dispensation had exhibited any manifest overture, or promise of pardon; for the light of nature doth only direct unto duty, condemning every man in his own judgment and conscience, who transgresseth it, but as to pardon in case of transgression, it is blind and silent; and the law of Moses rigorously exacteth punctual obedience, denouncing in express terms a condemnation and curse to the transgressors thereof in any part; from whence he collecteth, that *no man can be justified by the works of the Law* (natural, or Mosaic; or that no precedent dispensation can justify any man) and that *a man is justified by faith*, or hath absolute need of such a justification as that, which the Gospel declareth and tendreth; λογίζμεθα ἔν, *we hence* (saith he) *collect*, or argue, *that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the Law*: which justification must therefore import the receiving that free pardon, which the criminal and guilty world did stand in need of, which the forlorn and deplorable state of mankind did groan for, without which no man could have any comfort in his mind, any hope, or any capacity of salvation. If the state of Man was a state of rebellion, and consequently of heinous guilt, of having forfeited God's favour, of obnoxiousness to God's wrath; then that justification, which was needful, was a dispensation of mercy, remitting that guilt, and removing those penalties.

Again, St. Paul commendeth the excellency of the Evangelical dispensation from hence, that it entirely doth ascribe the justification of men to God's mercy and favour, excluding any merit of Man, any right or title thereto, grounded upon what Man hath performed; consequently advancing the glory of God, and depressing the vanity of Man: If (saith he) *Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to boast, for that to him, who worketh, wages are not reckoned as bestowed in favour, but are paid as debt*; so it would be, if men were justified by works,

works, they might claim to themselves the due consequences thereof, impunity and reward; they would be apt to please themselves, and boast of the effects arising from their own performances; but if, as the Gospel teacheth, *men are justified freely (gratis) by God's mercy and grace*, without any regard to what they formerly have done, either good or bad, those who have lived wickedly and impiously (upon their compliance with the terms proposed to them) being no less capable thereof, than the most righteous and pious persons; then *where is boasting? it is excluded*; then surely no man can assume any thing to himself, then all the glory and praise are due to God's frank goodness: the purport of which reasoning (so often used) doth imply, that a man's justification signifieth his being accepted or approved as just, standing *rectus in curia*, being in God's esteem, and by his sentence, absolved from guilt and punishment, the which cannot otherwise be obtained, than from divine favour declared and exhibited in the Gospel; according as St. Paul elsewhere fully speaketh: *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 4. 5. Rom. 3. 27. Eph. 2. 9. Eph. 1. 6.

Again, St. Paul expresseth Justification as an act of judgment performed by God, whereby he declareth his own righteousness, or justice; that justice consisting in acceptance of a competent satisfaction offered to him in amends for the debt due to him, and in reparation of the injury done unto him, in consequence thereof acquitting the debtor, and remitting the offence; so those words declare: *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus*: Justification there we see is expressed a result of Christ's redemption, and the act of God consequent thereon; so is remission of sins; God by them jointly demonstrating his justice and goodness, so that they may be well conceived the same thing diversly expressed, or having several names according to some divers formalities of respect. So in other places, sometimes justification, sometimes remission of sins are reckoned the proper and immediate effects of our Saviour's passion: *Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath*: and *In whom* (saith he again in the first of the Epistle to the Ephesians) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*; which argueth the equivalency of these terms. Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 5. 9. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14.

So likewise a main point of the Evangelical Covenant on God's part is made justifying of a man by his faith, or upon it; and remission of sins upon the same condition, is also made the like principal point, which sometime is put alone, as implying all the benefits of that covenant. Gal. 3. per tot. Rom. 11. 27.

Again, justification is by St. Paul made the immediate consequent, or special adjunct of Baptism; therein, he saith, *we die to sin* (by resolution and engagement to lead a new life in obedience to God's commandment) and so dying we are said to be justified from sin (that which otherwise is expressed, or expounded, by being freed from sin;) now the freedom from sin obtained in Baptism is frequently declared to be the remission of sin then conferred, and solemnly confirmed by a visible seal. Rom. 6. 2. Rom. 6. 6, 7. 6. 18, 22.

Whereas also so frequently we are said to be *justified by faith*, and according to the general tenour of Scripture, the immediate consequent of faith is Baptism; therefore dispensing the benefits consigned in Baptism, is coincident with justification; and that dispensation is frequently signified to be the cleansing us from sin by entire remission thereof. Eph. 5. 26. Tit. 3. 5. Acts 13. 38. 22. 16.

3. Farther, The same notion may be confirmed by comparing this term with other terms and phrases equivalent, or opposite to this of justification.

One equivalent phrase is imputation of righteousness: *As* (saith St. Paul) *David speaketh of that man's blessedness, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; Blessed are they, whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord will not impute sin*; whence to him that considers the drift and force of St. Paul's discourse, it will clearly appear,

appear, that justification, imputing righteousness, not imputing sin, and remission of sin are the same thing; otherwise the Apostle's discourse would not signifie or conclude any thing.

Rom. 3. 20. For confirmation of his discourse (arguing free justification by God's mercy, not for our works) St. Paul also doth alledge that place in the Psalm, Gal. 2. 16. *For in thy sight shall no man living be justified*; the sense of which place is evidently this, that no man living, his actions being strictly tried and weighed, shall appear guiltless, or deserve to be acquitted; but shall stand in need of mercy, or can no otherwise be justified than by a special act of grace.

Rom. 4. 3, 22. Again, imputing faith for righteousness is the same with justifying by faith Gal. 3. 6. (*Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*) but that imputation is plainly nothing else, but the approving him, and taking him for a righteous person in regard to his faith.

Rom. 2. 13. Again, justification is the same with being righteous before God, as appeareth by those words: *Not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified*; but being just before God, plainly signifieth nothing else but being accepted by God, or approved to his esteem and judgment.

Rom. 5. 9, 10. Being reconciled to God seemeth also to be the same with being justified by him; as appeareth by these words, *Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life*: where *πολλῷ μᾶλλον δικαιοσύνης*, and *πολλῷ μᾶλλον κατελλάγημεν*, seem to signifie the same; but that reconciliation is interpreted by remission of sins: *God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*.

Rom. 11. 30, 31, 32. To obtain mercy is another term signifying justification, and what doth that import but having the remission of sins in mercy bestowed on us.

Rom. 5. 16, 18. Again, Justification is opposed directly to condemnation: *As (saith he) by the offence of one man (judgment came) upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one man (the free gift came) upon all men to justification of life* (justification of life, that is, a justification so relating to life, or bestowing a promise thereof, as the condemnation opposite thereto respected death, which it threatned.) In which place St. Paul comparing the first Adam with his actions, and their consequences, to the second Adam with his performances, and what resulted from them, teacheth us, that as the transgression of the first did involve mankind in guilt, and brought consequently upon men a general sentence of death, (forasmuch as all men did follow him in commission of sin;) so the obedience of the second did absolve all men from guilt, and restored them consequently into a state of immortality (all men, under the condition prescribed, who (as it is said) should receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness tendered to them;) the justification therefore he speaketh of doth so import an absolution from guilt and punishment, as the condemnation signifieth a being declared guilty, and adjudged to punishment.

Ver. 17. Bellarmine indeed (who in answering to this place objected against his doctrine, blunders extremely, and is put to his trumps of Sophistry) telleth us, that in this place to maintain the parallel or *antithesis* between Adam and Christ, justification must signifie infusion of grace, or putting into a man's soul an inherent righteousness; because Adam's sin did constitute us unjust with an inherent unrighteousness: but (with his favour) justification and condemnation being both of them the acts of God, and it being plain, that God condemning doth not infuse any inherent unrighteousness into man, neither doth he justifying (formally) (if the *antithesis* must be parr,) put any inherent righteousness into him: inherent unrighteousness in the former case may be a consequent of that condemnation, and inherent righteousness may be connected with this justification; but neither *that*, nor *this* may formally signifie those qualities respectively: as the inherent unrighteousness consequent upon Adam's sin is not included in God's condemning, so neither is the inherent righteousness proceeding from our Saviour's obedience contained in God's justifying men.

But

But however most plainly (and beyond all evasions) justification and condemnation are opposed other where in this *Epistle*: Who (saith St. Paul) ^{Rom. 8. 33.} shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? (or criminate against them) ³⁴ *is God who justifieth, who is he that condemneth?* what can be more clear, ³⁵ *than that there justification signifieth absolution from all guilt and blame?*

4. Farther, this notion may be confirmed, by excluding that sense, which in opposition thereto is assigned, according to which justification is said to import not only remission of sin, and acceptance with God, but the making a man intrinsically righteous, by infusing into him (as they speak) a habit of grace, or charity; the putting into a man a *righteousness*, by which (as the Council of Trent expresseth it) *We are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed, but are called, and become truly righteous, receiving righteousness in our selves.* ^{Justitiam in nobis recipien- tes.}

Now admitting this to be true, as in a sense it surely is, that whoever (according to St. Paul's meaning in this *Epistle*) is justified, is also really at the same time endued with some measure of that intrinick righteousness, which those men speak of (for as much as that faith, which is required to justification (being a gift of God, managed by his providence, and wrought by his preventing grace,) doth include a sincere and stedfast purpose of forsaking all impiety, of amendment of life, of obedience to God, which purpose cleanseth the heart, and is apt to produce as well inward righteousness of heart, as outward righteousness of practice; for that also to every sound believer upon his faith is bestowed the spirit of God, as a principle of righteousness, dwelling in him, directing, admonishing, exciting him to do well, assisting and enabling him sufficiently to the performance of those conditions, or those duties, which Christianity requireth, and the believer thereof undertaketh; which, the man's honest and diligent endeavour concurring, will surely beget the practice of all righteousness, and in continuance of such practice will render it habitual) avowing, I say, willingly, that such a righteousness doth ever accompany the justification St. Paul speaketh of, yet that sort of righteousness doth not seem implied by the word Justification, according to St. Paul's intent, in those places, where he discourseth about justification by faith; for that such a sense of the word doth not well consist with the drift and efficacy of his reasoning, nor with divers passages in his discourse. For,

1. Whereas St. Paul from the general depravation of manners in all men (both Jews and Gentiles) argueth the necessity of such a justification, as the Christian Gospel declareth and exhibiteth, if we should take Justification for infusing an inherent quality of righteousness into men, by the like discourse we might infer the imperfection and insufficiency of Christianity it self, and consequently the necessity of another dispensation beside it; for that even all Christians (as Saint James saith) do offend often, and commission of sin doth also much reign among them; so that St. Paul's discourse (justification being taken in this sense) might strongly be retorted against himself. ^{James 3. 2.}

2. Supposing that sense of Justification, a Jew might easily invalidate St. Paul's ratiocination, by saying, that even their Religion did plainly enough declare such a justification, which God did bestow upon all good men in their way, as by their frequent acknowledgments and devotions is apparent; such as those of the Psalmist: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, renew a right Spirit within me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; incline my heart unto thy Testimonies* ^{Psal. 51. 10. Psal. 143. 10. Psal. 119. 35.} which sort of prayers God hearing did infuse righteousness, and justified those persons in this sense; so that Christianity herein could not challenge any thing peculiar, or could upon this score appear so necessary, as St. Paul pretendeth.

3. From the justification St. Paul speaketh of, all respect to any works, and to any qualifications in men (such as might beget in them any confidence in themselves, or yield occasion of boasting) is excluded; it cannot therefore well be understood for a constituting Man intrinsically righteous,

or infusing worthy qualities into him; but rather for an act of God terminated upon a man as altogether unworthy of God's love, as impious, as an enemy, as a pure object of mercy; so it is most natural to understand those expressions, importing the same thing; *God justifieth the ungodly; we being sinners Christ died for us* (purchasing, as the following words imply, justification for us) *being yet enemies we by his death were reconciled* (or justified, for reconciliation and justification, as we before noted, do there signifie the same.)

Rom. 4. 5.
5. 8. 5. 10.

4. *Abraham* is brought in as an instance of a person justified in the same manner, as Christians are according to the Gospel: but his justification was merely the approving and esteeming him righteous, in regard (not to any other good works, but) to his stedfast faith, and strong persuasion concerning the power and faithfulness of God — because *he was fully persuaded, that what God had promised he was able to perform*; to which faith and justification consequent thereon, St. Paul comparing those of Christians subjoineth; *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* As then it were an idle thing to fanie a righteousness, upon the score of that belief, dropt into *Abraham*; and as his being justified is expressly called, having righteousness, upon the account of his faith, imputed (or ascribed) to him; So our justification (like and answerable to his) should correspondently be understood, the approving and accounting us, notwithstanding our former transgressions, as righteous persons, in regard to that honest and stedfast faith, wherein we resemble *that Father of the faithful.*

Rom. 4. 21.
Rom. 4. 23,
24.

Even St. James himself, when he saith that *Abraham* and *Rahab* were justified by works, 'tis evident that he meaneth not that they had certain righteous qualities infused into them, or were made thence by God intrinsically more righteous than they were before, but that they were approved and accepted by God, because of the good works they performed (in faith and obedience to God) one of them offering to sacrifice his Son, the other preserving the Spies sent from God's people.

5. The so often using the word Imputation of righteousness, instead of Justification, doth imply this act not to be a transient operation upon the soul of Man, but an act immanent to God's mind, respecting Man only as its object, and translating him into another relative state: With this sense that word excellently well agreeth, otherwise it were obscure, and so apt to perplex the matter, that probably St. Paul would not have used it.

6. Again, When it is said again and again, *that faith is imputed for righteousness*, it is plain enough, that no other thing in Man was required there-to; to say, that he is thereby sanctified, or hath gracious habits infused, is uncouth and arbitrary: the obvious meaning is, that therefore he is graciously accepted and approved, as we said before.

7. We might in fine add, that the word Justification is very seldom, or never used in that sense of making Persons righteous, or infusing righteousness into them. *Bellarmino* and *Grotius*, having searched with all possible diligence, do alledge three or four places, wherein (with some plausible appearance) they pretend it must be so understood; but as they are so few, so are they not any of them thoroughly clear and certain; but are capable to be otherwise interpreted without much straining; The clearest place, *Dan. 12. 3.* the LXX read *מַצְדִּיקִים, אֲנִי וְדִמְיוֹנִי*, which the Hebrew, and sense will bear. Wherefore the other sense, which we have maintained, being undeniably common and current in the Scripture, and having so many particular reasons shewing it agreeable to St. Paul's intent, seemeth rather to be embraced.

In St. Paul's Epistles I can only find three or four places, wherein the word *Justifying* may with any fair probability be so extended as to signifie an internal operation of God upon the Soul of men; they are these;

1 Cor. 6. 11.
* in

*And such were some of you; but ye have been washed, but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus, and * by the Spirit*

rit of our God; where Justification being performed by the Spirit of God, seemeth to imply a spiritual operation upon a man's soul, as an ingredient thereof.

According to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renew- Tit. 3. 6, 7.
ing of the holy Ghost; which he poured on us richly by Jesus Christ our Saviour;
that being justified by his grace, we may be made heirs, according to the hope of
everlasting life; where God's justifying us by the Grace of Christ seemeth to
include the renewing by the holy Ghost.

He that dieth, is justified from sin; where St. Paul speaking about our obli- Rom. 6. 7.
gation to lead a new life in holy obedience, upon account of our being dedicated
to Christ, and renouncing sin in Baptism, may be interpreted to mean a being
really in our hearts purified and freed from sin.

Whom he predestinated, those he called; and whom he called, those he justified, Rom. 8. 30.
and whom he justified, those he glorified; where the chief acts of God toward
those, who finally shall be saved, being in order purposely recited, and Justifi-
cation being immediately (without interposing Sanctification) coupled to Glo-
rification, the word may seem to comprize Sanctification.

If considering these places (which yet are not clearly prejudicial to the no-
tion we have made good, but may well be interpreted so as to agree thereto)
it shall seem to any, that St. Paul doth not ever so strictly adhere to that no-
tion, as not sometime to extend the word to a larger sense, I shall not much
contend about it: It is an ordinary thing for all Writers to use their words
sometimes in a larger, sometimes in a stricter sense; and it sufficeth to have
shewn, that where St. Paul purposely treateth about the matter we discourse
upon, the purport of his discourse argueth, that he useth it according to that
notion, which we have proposed.

8. I shall only add one small observation, or conjecture, favouring this no-
tion; which is the probable occasion of all St. Paul's discourse and disputation
about this point, which seemeth to have been this: That Christianity should
(upon so slender a condition or performance as that of Faith) tender unto all
persons indifferently, however culpable or flagitious their former lives had been,
a plenary remission of sins and reception into God's favour, did seem an unrea-
sonable and implausible thing to many: The Jews could not well conceive, Vid. Cyrill.
or relish that any man so easily should be translated into a state equal, or supe-
rior to that, which they took themselves peculiarly to enjoy: The Gentiles
themselves (especially such as conceited well of their own wisdom and vertue) lib. 7. p. 248.
could hardly digest it: Celsus in Origen could not imagine or admit, that bare
faith should work such a miracle, as presently to turn a dissolute person into
a Saint, beloved of God, and designed to happiness. *where Justifi-
cation is very
well described.*

Zozimus saith of Constantine, that he chose Christianity as the only Religion,
that promised impunity and pardon for his enormous practices; intimating
his dislike of that point in our Religion. This prejudice against the Gospel
St. Paul removeth, by shewing, that because of all mens guilt and sinfulness,
such an exhibition of mercy, such an overture of acceptance, such a remission
of sin was necessary in order to salvation, so that without it no man could be
exempted from wrath and misery; and that consequently all other Religions
(as not exhibiting such a remission) were to be deemed in a main point de-
fective: When therefore he useth the word Justification to express this matter,
it is reasonable to suppose, that he intendeth thereby to signify that remission,
or dispensation of mercy.

It may be objected that St. Austin and some others of the Fathers do use the
word commonly according to the sense of the Tridentine Council. I answer,
that the point having never been discussed, and they never having thoroughly
considered the sense of St. Paul, might unawares take the word as it sounded
in Latine, especially the sense they affixed to it, signifying a matter very true
and certain in Christianity. The like hath happened to other Fathers in other
cases; and might happen to them in this, not to speak accurately in points that
never had been sifted by disputation. More I think we need not say in an-
swer to their authority.

VI. So much may suffice for a general explication of the notion; but for a more full clearing of the point, it may be requisite to resolve a question concerning the time when this act is performed, or dispensed; It may be enquired when God justifieth, whether once, or at several times, or continually. To which question I answer briefly:

1. That the justification which St. Paul discourseth of, seemeth in his meaning, only or especially to be that act of grace, which is dispensed to persons at their Baptism, or at their entrance into the Church, when they openly professing their faith, and undertaking the practice of Christian duty, God most solemnly and formally doth absolve them from all guilt, and accepteth them into a state of favour with him; that St. Paul only or chiefly respecteth this act, considering his design, I am inclined to think, and many passages in his discourse seem to imply.

If his design were (as I conceive it probable) to vindicate the proceeding of God, peculiarly declared in the Gospel, in receiving the most notorious and heinous transgressors to grace in Baptism, then especially must the justification he speaketh of relate to that; to confirm which supposition, we may consider, that,

1. In several places Justification is coupled with baptismal regeneration and absolution: *Such were some of you, but ye have been washed, ye have been sanctified, ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus:* (where, by the way, being sanctified and being justified seem equivalent terms, as in that place where Christ is said to have given himself for the Church, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, Sanctification (I conceive) importeth the same thing with Justification. Again, *He saved us by the laver of Regeneration, that having been justified by his grace, we may be made heirs of everlasting life.*

2. St. Paul in expressing this act, as it respecteth the faithful, commonly doth use a tense referring to the past time: he saith not *δικαιώμενοι*, being justified, but *δικαιωθέντες*, having been justified; not *δικαιώδε*, ye are justified, but *δικαιώσθε*, ye have been justified, namely, at some remarkable time, that is, at their entrance into Christianity. (Our Translators do render it according to the present time, but it should be rendred, as I say, in our Text, and in other places.)

3. St. Paul, in the 6th to the Romans, discourseth thus; Seeing we in Baptism are cleansed and disentangled from sin, are *dead to it, and so justified from it*, God forbid that we should return to live in the practice thereof, so abusing and evacuating the grace we have received; which discourse seemeth plainly to signify, that he treateth about the justification conferred in Baptism.

4. He expresseth the justification he speaketh of by the words *παρεσις τῶν προηγουμένων ἁμαρτιῶν*, the passing over foregoing sins, which seemeth to respect that universal absolution, which is exhibited in Baptism. Being (saith he) *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*

5. The relation this justification hath to faith, being dispensed in regard thereto (or upon condition thereof) doth infer the same: Faith is nothing else but a hearty embracing Christianity, which first exerteth it self by open declaration and avowal in Baptism (when we believe with our hearts to righteousness, and confess with our mouth to salvation;) to that time therefore the act of Justification may be supposed especially to appertain: (then, when the Evangelical covenant is solemnly ratified, the grace thereof especially is conferred.) Upon such considerations I conceive that St. Paul's justification chiefly doth respect that act of grace, which God consigneth to us at our Baptism. But farther,

2. The virtue and effect of that first justifying act doth continue (we abide in a justified state) so long as we do perform the conditions imposed by God, and undertaken by us at our first justification; *holding fast the profession of our hope without wavering; keeping faith, and a good conscience; so long as we do not forfeit the benefit of that grace by making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience,*

science, relapsing into infidelity, or profaneness of life. Our case is plainly like ^{2 Pet. 2. 20,} to that of a Subject, who having rebelled against his Prince, and thence incur- ^{&c.} red his displeasure, but having afterward upon his submission, by the clemency ^{Heb. 10. 26,} of his Prince, obtained an act of pardon, restoring him to favour, and enjoy- ^{38. 6. 1.} ment of the protection and privileges suitable to a loyal subject, doth continue in this state, until by forsaking his allegiance, and running again into rebellion, he so loseth the benefit of that pardon, that his offence is aggravated thereby; so if we do persevere firm in faith and obedience, we shall (according to the purport of the Evangelical covenant) continue in the state of grace and favour with God, and in effect remain justified; otherwise the virtue of our justification ceaseth; and we in regard thereto are more deeply involved in guilt.

3. Although Justification chiefly signifieth the first act of grace toward a Christian at his Baptism, yet (according to analogy of reason, and affinity in the nature of things) every dispensation of pardon granted upon repentance may be stiled Justification; for as particular acts of repentance, upon the commission of any particular sins, do not so much differ in nature, as in measure or degree from that general conversion, practised in embracing the Gospel; So the grace vouchsafed upon these penitential acts, is only in largeness of extent, ^{Penitentia imitatur Baptismatis gratiam. Hier. ado. Pelag. 1. 10.} and solemnity of administration diversified from that; especially considering that Repentance after Baptism is but a reviving of that first great resolution and engagement we made in Baptism; that remission of sin upon it is only the renovation of the grace then exhibited; that the whole transaction in this case is but a reinstating the covenant then made (and afterward by transgression infringed) upon the same terms, which were then agreed upon; that consequently (by congruous analogy) this remission of sins, and restoring to favour, granted to a penitent, are only the former justification reinforced: whence they may bear its name, but whether St. Paul ever meaneth the word to signify thus, I cannot affirm.

Now according to each of these notions all good Christians may be said to have been justified; they have been justified by a general abolition of their sins, and reception into God's favour in Baptism; they so far have enjoyed the virtue of that gracious dispensation, and continued in a justified state, as they have persisted in faith and obedience; they have upon falling into sin, and rising thence by repentance, been justified by particular remissions. So that *having been justified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Believe in God.

SERMON VI.

THE BEING of GOD

Proved from the
Frame of the World.

JER. 51. 15.

Jer. 10. 12. *He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the World by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the Heaven by his understanding.*

THE attentive observation of this World, or visible Frame, is not only in it self a most worthy employment of our thoughts (much more noble than any of those petty cares, which commonly possess, or distract our minds) but if either the example of the best men, or the great usefulness thereof, to the best purposes, can oblige us, even a considerable duty not to be neglected by us. For it is that which affords most cogent and satisfactory arguments to convince us of, and to confirm us in the belief of that truth, which is the foundation of all Religion and piety, The Being of one God, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfections, the maker and upholder of all things: It instructs us not only that God is, but more distinctly shews what he is; declaring his chief and peculiar attributes of wisdom, goodness, and power superlative: It also serves to beget in our minds affections toward God suitable to these notions; a reverent adoration of his unsearchable wisdom; an awful dread of his powerful Majesty; a grateful love of his gracious benignity and goodness. To these uses we find it applied by the best men, not only by the wisest Philosophers among Heathens, but by the holy Prophets of God; who frequently harp upon this string, and make sweetest melody thereon; exciting both in themselves and others, pious thoughts and holy devotions therewith; strengthening their faith in God; advancing their reverence toward him; quickning and enflaming their love of him; magnifying his glory and praise thereby; by the consideration (I say) of those wonderful effects, discernible in nature, or appearing to us in this visible world.

And

PL. 8. 3. 191.
33. 5. 89. 11.
148. 5. 104. 3.
115. 16. 119.
64. 145. 10.
147. 4.

And if ever to imitate them herein were necessary, it seems to be so now, when a pretence to natural knowledge, and acquaintance with these things hath been so much abused to the promoting of Atheism and irreligion; when that instrument which was chiefly designed, and is of it self most apt, to bring all reasonable creatures to the knowledge, and to the veneration of their Maker, hath (in a method most preposterous and unnatural) been perverted to contrary ends and effects. To the preventing and removing which abuse, as every man should contribute what he can, so let me be allowed to endeavour somewhat toward it, by representing briefly what my meditation did suggest, serving to declare, that (as the Prophet asserts, or implies in the words I read) even in this visible World, there are manifest tokens, or footsteps by which we may discover it to be the work, or product of one Being, incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good; to whom consequently we must owe the highest respect and love, all possible worship and service. Of these footsteps (or signs) there be innumerable many which singly taken, do discover such perfections to be concerned in the production of them; the relation of several to each other do more strongly and plainly confirm the same; the connexion and correspondence of all together doth still add force and evidence thereto, each attesting to the existence of those perfections, all conspiring to declare them centred and united in one Cause and Being.

I. View we first singly those things, which are most familiar and obvious to our senses (for only some such I mean to consider, such as any man awake, and in his senses, without any study or skill more than ordinary; without being a deep Philosopher, or a Curious *Virtuoso*; may with an easy attention observe and discern) View we such objects, I say; for instance first, those plants we every day do see, smell and taste; Have not that number, that figure, that order, that temperament, that whole contexture and contemperation of Parts we discern in them, a manifest relation to those operations they perform? were not such organs so fashioned, and so situated, and so tempered, and in all respects so fitted, some of them in order to the successive propagation of them (that they might in kind never fail or perish, but in that respect become as it were immortal) some in regard to their present nutrition and maintenance (that the individuals themselves might not, before their due period of subsistence run through, be spent, or destroyed) some for shelter and defence against all sort of causes prejudicial to either of those continuances in being respectively; to omit those, which serve for grace and ornament; (Do not, I say, the seed most evidently respect the propagation of the kind; the root the drawing of nourishment, the nervous filaments the conveyance of that; the skin or bark the keeping all together close and safe; the husks and shells preservation of the seed; the leaves defence of the fruit?) that such a constitution of parts is admirably fit for such purposes, we cannot be so stupid as not to perceive; we cannot but observe it necessary, for that by detraction, or altering any of them, we obstruct those effects. Whence then, I enquire, could that fitness proceed? from Chance, or casual motions of matter? But, is it not repugnant to the name and nature of Chance, that any thing regular, or constant should arise from it? That by it causes vastly many in number and different in quality (such as are the ingredients into the frame of the least organ in a plant) should not once, not sometimes, not often only but always in one continual unaltered method concur to the same end and effect (to the same useful end, to the same handsome effect?) are not confusion, disparity, deformity, unaccountable change and variety the proper issues of Chance? 'Tis Aristotle's discourse: *That one, or two things, saith he, should happen to be in the same manner, is not unreasonable to suppose; but that all things should conspire by chance, it looks like a fiction to conceive: what is universal and perpetual cannot result from Chance. We can only,* (saith he

— *fortuna amica varietati constantiam respuit.* Cic. de Nat. D. 2.
Ο λαν ὑπερβαλλον δευδμὸς ἐ δὲ παντα μετέχον τάξεως δέας ὅ δὴ τὸτο συνάμειος ἐγγον, ἥτις καὶ τὸδε συνίχι τὸ πᾶν. Arist. Pol. 7. 4.
Τὸ μὲν ὅδ' ἐν ἡ δὲ οὗτοισιν ἐχέον; ἐδὲ ἀποτοπ. τὸ δὲ πᾶν ὁμοίως πλάσσει ἵσταν, ἀμα δὲ ἐκ ἐδὲ ἐν τοῖς φύσιν τὸ εἰς ἐτυχε. ἐδὲ τὸ πᾶσι αὐτοῖς, ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ὑπερβαλλον τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς τύχης. De Celo 2. 8.
Μὲνα ὅ δὲ ταῦτα δετιον ἐυλόγως, ἐδὲ ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἡ πάντων ὁμοίως ὑπάρχει. Id. de Celo.

— fortuna amica varietati constanti-
am respuit. Cic. de Nat. D. 2.

Ὁ ὅτις ὑπερβαλλὼν δεινὸς ἐστὶν
παντα μετέχει τάξεως θείας γὰρ δὴ
ταῦτα δυνάμειος ἔργον, ἥτις καὶ τόδε
συνέχεται τὸ πᾶν. Αἰνιστ. Ρολ. 7. 4.

Τὸ μὲν δὲ ἐν τῷ δόξῳ τῶν τεσσάρων ἔχει,
ἐν δὲ ἀποστολῇ. τὸ δὲ πᾶν ὁμοίως πᾶσι
μαρτυροῦνται, ἀλλὰ δὲ ἐκ δὲ ἐν τοῖς
πρῶτοις τὸ αὖτε ἔτυχε. ἐν δὲ τῷ πᾶσι
ἐκ πᾶσι ὑπάρχον τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς τύχης.
De Galo 1. 8.

Μόνα γὰρ ταῦτα θετίον ἐυλόγως, ὅσα
ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἢ πάντων ὀρθῶς ὑπά-
χοιτα. Id. de Calo.

K 3

again)

again) *with good reason assert, or suppose such causes of things, as we see generally, or frequently to occur.* Now did we ever observe (or ever any man through the whole course of times) any new thing like, or comparable to any of these to spring up casually? do we not with admiration regard (as a thing very rare and unaccountable) in other pieces of matter any gross resemblance to these; that seemeth to arise from contingent motions and occurrences of bodies? If Chance hath formerly produced such things, how comes it, that it doth not sometime now produce the like; whence becomes it for so many ages altogether impotent and idle? is it not the same kind of cause? hath it not the same instruments to work with, and the same materials to work upon? The truth is, as it doth not now, so it did not, it could not ever produce such effects; such effects are plainly improper and incongruous to such a cause: Chance never writ a legible Book; Chance never built a fair house; Chance never drew a neat picture, it never did any of these things, nor ever will; nor can be without absurdity supposed able to do them, which yet are works very gross and rude, very easie and feasible (as it were) in comparison to the production of a flower, or a tree. 'Tis not therefore reasonable to ascribe those things to chance: to what then? will you say, to Necessity? If you do, you do only alter the phrase; for necessary causality (as applicable to this case, and taken without relation to some wisdom, or counsel that established it) is but another name for chance; they both are but several terms denoting blindness, and unadvisedness in action; both must imply a fortuitous determination of causes, acting without design or rule. A fortuitous determination, I say; for motions of matter, not guided by art, or counsel, must be in their rise fortuitous (inasmuch as that according to the nature of the thing there is no repugnance, and we may easily conceive it possible, that the matter might have been moved otherwise; there being therein no principle originally determining it to this more than to that sort of motion) and the same motions in their process must be determinate, because in their subject there is no principle, whereby it can alter its course. The same effect therefore of this kind, if necessary is casual as to its original, and in that respect may be said to come from chance; if casual, is necessary in the progress, and may thence be said to proceed from necessity. And although we should suppose the beginning of these causes in their action, or motion to be eternal, it were all one; for whether now, or yesterday, or from eternity, infers no difference (except the entangling our minds, and encumbering the case with impertinent circumstances) as to our purpose; not the circumstance of the time, but the quality of the cause being only here considerable; the same causes (abstracting from all counsel ordering them) being alike apt, or inept yesterday as to day, always as sometimes, from all eternity, as at any set time to produce such effects. Neither can we therefore reasonably attribute the effects we speak of to necessity; except only to such an hypothetical necessity, as implies a determination from causes acting by will and understanding; of such a necessity matter is very susceptible; being perfectly obedient to art directing it with competent force; As on the other hand we find it by reason and experience altogether unapt, without such direction, of it self (that is either necessarily or contingently) to come into any regular form, or to pursue any constant course; it being, as we see, shattered into particles innumerable, different in size, shape and motion, according to all variety more than imaginable; thence only fit in their proceedings to cross and confound each other: The determination therefore of such causes as these to such ends and effects, can be only the result of wisdom, art and counsel; which alone (accompanied with sufficient power) can digest things, void of understanding, into handsome order, can direct them unto fit uses, can preserve them in a constant tenour of action; These effects must therefore, I say, proceed from wisdom, and that no mean one, but such as greatly surpasses our comprehension, joined with a power equally great: For to digest bodies so very many, so very fine and subtile, so divers in motion and tendency, that they shall never hinder or disturb one another, but always conspire to the same design,

design, is a performance exceedingly beyond our capacity to reach how it could be contrived, or accomplished; all the endeavours of our deepest skill, and most laborious industry cannot arrive to the producing of any work not extremely inferior to any of these, not in comparison very simple and base; neither can our wits serve to devise, nor our sense to direct, nor our hand to execute any work, in any degree like to those. So that it was but faintly, though truly, said of him in Cicero, concerning things of this kind:

* Nature's powerful sagacity no skill, no hand, no artist can follow by imitati-

on.

* Natura solertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex consequi possit imitando. Cic. de N. D. pag. 83.

And if we have reason to acknowledge so much wisdom and power discovered in one plant, and the same consequently multiplied in so many thousands of divers kinds; how much more may we discern them in any one animal, in all of them? the parts of whom in unconceivable variety, in delicate minuteness, in exquisiteness of shape, position and temper do indeed so far exceed the other, as they appear designed to functions far more various and more noble; the enumeration of a few whereof, obvious to our sense, in some one living creature, together with conjectures about their manner of operation, and their use, how much industry of man hath it employed; how many volumes hath it filled, and how many more may it do, without detecting a ten thousandth part of what is there most obvious and easie; without piercing near the depth of that wisdom, which formed so curious a piece? So much however is palpably manifest, that each of these so many organs was designed, and fitted on purpose to that chief use, or operation we see it to perform; this of them to continue the kind, that to preserve the *individuum*; this to discern what is necessary, convenient or pleasant to the creature; or what is dangerous, offensive or destructive thereto; that to pursue or embrace, to decline or shun it; this to enjoy what is procured of good; that to remove what is hurtful or useless; or to guard from mischief and injury; That each one is furnished with such apt instruments, suitable to its particular needs, appetites, capacities, stations is most apparent; And I must therefore here ask again (and that with more advantage) whence this could proceed: whence all these parts came to be fashioned and suited; all of them so necessary, or so convenient, that none without the imperfection and the prejudice of the creature, some not without its destruction can be wanting? who shaped and tempered those hidden subtle springs of life; sense, imagination, memory, passion; who impressed on them a motion so regular, and so durable, which through so many years, among so many adverse contingencies assailing it, is yet so steadily maintained? can this however proceed from giddy chance, or blind necessity? could ever (of old, or lately 'tis all one) senseless matter jumble it self so fortunately, into so wonderful postures, so that of those innumerable myriads of atoms, or small insensible bodies (which compose each of these curious engines) none should in its roving miss the way; none fail to stop and seat it self in that due place; where exactest art would have disposed it? Could so many, so dimm, so narrow marks be hit without the aim of a most piercing and unerring eye; without the guidance of a most steady and immoveable hand? all that grace and beauty which so delights our sense beholding it; and all that correspondence and symmetry which so satisfies our mind considering it; all that virtue and energy; extending to performances so great and admirable, must they be ascribed to causes of no worth, and supposed done to no purpose? That eye which reaches the very stars, and in a moment renders all the world as it were present to the creature that useth it; that ear which perceives the least stirring of the air about it, and so subtly distinguishes the smallest differences in its motion; that tongue which so readily is composed to imitate so many petty diversities of tune; those other organs, which are affected by the least breath or vapour, by the least tangué or savour, so that it by them

* Επειδὴ οὐ μελὼν πάντων τῶν διαπλάσσειν, τὸ χεῖμα, τὰς ἐνεργείας, τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλα συμφωνίαν ἢ πάσης πόλεως εὐνομιαν, ἢ φιλοσοφίας ἀπαγ-
τας τοὺς πολίτας ἐχέοντες ἀκρίβειστον ὄψιν τῶν μελῶν τῶν πρὸς ἀλλήλα πολιτείαν. Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 69.

vid. Chryl.
And. id.

can

can both perceive the presence, and distinguish the quality of whatever is near, that it may not be disappointed in missing what is beneficial, nor be surprized by the assault of what is noxious thereto; all these and many more,

Μὰ τι ἄχρηστον τελεῖται ἐν τῇ φύσει; τί τὸ ἐν τῇ φύσει καὶ τῇ φύσει ὡς μάλιστα περιττότατον ἰδύμετο; ἡ δὲ φύσις αὐτῆς τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, &c. Epict. 1. 16.

the defect, distemper, or dislocation of which would be disgraceful, incommodious, or destructive to the creature; all these I say, can any man, endowed with common sense, or ordinary ingenuity affirm to have proceeded from any other cause, than from a wisdom and power incom-

prehensible? May not the most excellent pieces of humane artifice, the fairest structures, the finest portraictures, the most ingenious and useful enquiries, such as we are wont most to admire and commend, with infinitely more ease, happen to exist without any contrivance or industry spent upon them? if we cannot allow those rude imitations of nature, to spring up of themselves, but as soon as we espy them are ready to acknowledge them products of excellent art, though we know not the artist, nor did see him work; how much more reason is there that we should believe those works of nature, so incomparably more accurate, to proceed also from art, although invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a secret hand? I can assure you of those, who have with greatest attention contemplated these things, and who pass for men most able to judge in the case (even those who have discovered least affection to Religion, or indeed are more than suspected of an aversion from it; whose words therefore may be taken at least for impartial dictates of common sense) that even from such the irresistible force and evidence of the thing hath extorted clear and ample confessions to this purpose; That in nature nothing is performed without reason or design; but every thing in the best manner, and

Arist. de part. An. 1. 1. Μᾶλλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἐν φύσει, καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς φύσεως ἔργοις, ἢ ἐν τοῖς τέχναις. Ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ εὖ ἐκδοχόμενον τὸ βέλτιστον. Phys. 2. 8. Ἡ φύσις ἰδὲν ἀλόγως ἰδὲν μάλιστα ποιεῖ. de Calo 1. 11. Ἐνεκα τοῦ ἀπαντα ὑπάρχει τὰ φύσει. de Anima 3. 12.

Gal. de placitis Hippoc. & Plat. 1. 7. de usu part. 3. Οἱ φύσιν ἔχοντες τὴν σοφίαν, οἱ τὴν δύναμιν, οἱ τὴν χεῖρ, &c. Card. de variet. 7. 27. pag. 283.

Hobbes de hom. cap. 1.

Itaque ad sensus procedo, satis habens si hujusmodi res attingero tantum, plene autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui si machinas omnes tum generationis, tum nutritionis satis perspexerint, nec tamen eas à mente aliqua conditas, ordinatasque ad sua quæque officia videntur, ipsi profecto sine mente esse censendi sunt.

Νὰ τὴν Δία καὶ τὰς θεὰς ἐν τῇ γυνόσκον ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ αἰδιότατον καὶ περὶ τὴν αἰδῆμον, καὶ ἐνχαλεῖται. Epict. 1. 16.

which, were our senses able to discern their constitution and texture, would afford matter of the same acknowledgment.

II. But if passing from such particulars, we observe the relation of several kinds of things, each to other, we shall find more reason to be convinced concerning the same excellent perfections farther extending themselves. By such comparison we may easily discern, that what speaks much of art in it self singly

to the best end; beyond what is done in any art; is frequently asserted, and assumed by Aristotle himself as a most evident truth: That in contriving the frame of our bodies (and the same holdeth concerning the bodies of other animals) a wisdom inscrutable; in accomplishing it a power insuperable; in designing to them so much of decency and convenience, a benignity worthy of all veneration are demonstrated; Galen in several places, with language very full and express, yea very earnest and pathetic doth acknowledge; That who doth attently regard a locust, or a caterpillar, or any other viler animal, shall every where therein discover a wonderful art and diligence, is an aphorism dropt even from the gloomy pen of Cardan. That if any man shall view thoroughly all the instruments both of generation and nutrition, and doth not perceive them to have been made, and ordered to their respective offices by some mind (or intelligent agent) he is to be reputed himself void of mind (or out of his wits) is the expression of another person well known among us, whom few do judge partial to this side, or suspicious of bearing a favourable prejudice to Religion. Thus doth common sense from these sort of beings, whereof there be innumerable exposed daily to our observation, even singly considered, deduce the existence of a wisdom, power and goodness unconceivably great; and there are probably divers others (stones, metals, minerals, &c.) no less obvious, even here upon the earth, our place of dwelling,

singly considered, declares more thereof in respect to other things; and that many things, in which, separately looked upon, we could perceive but small artifice, have indeed much of it in such relation; (which although seeming in themselves mean and despicable, are yet very useful and necessary to considerable purposes, in subserviency to the convenience of more noble beings) and though perhaps we cannot thoroughly penetrate the relative use and design of every thing, which hangs up before us in nature's shop (by reason of our incapacity, or unskilfulness in her trade) yet we shall have reason, from what we can plainly discover, to collect, that each piece there is a tool accommodate to some use. Is there not, for instance, a palpable relation between the frame, the temper, the natural inclinations, or instincts of each *animal*, and its element, or natural place and abode; wherein it can only live, finding therein its food, its harbour, its refuge? Is not to each faculty within (or to each sensitive organ) an object without prepared, exactly correspondent thereto; which were it wanting, the faculty would become vain and useless, yea sometime harmful and destructive; as reciprocally the object would import little or nothing, if such a faculty were not provided and fitted thereto? as for example, what would an eye (or the visive power) signify, if there were not light prepared to render things visible thereto; and how much less considerable than it is, would the goodly light it self be, were all things in nature blind, and incapable to discern thereby? what would the ear serve for, if the air were not suitably disposed (made neither too thick, nor too thin; neither too resty, nor too fleeting, but) in a due consistency, and capable of moderate undulations distinguishable thereby? the like we might with the same reason inquire concerning the other senses and faculties, vital or animal, and their respective objects, which we may observe with admirable congruity respecting each other. Have not all those goodly colours, and comely shapes, which in the leaves, the flowers, and the fruits of plants (I might add in gems and precious stones; yea in all sorts of living creatures) we behold, an evident respect to the sight, and the sight a no less visible reference to them? those many kinds of pleasant fragrantcy in herbs, flowers and spices, have they not a like manifest relation to the smell, and it to them? Could all that great variety of wholesome, savoury, and delicious fruits, herbs, grains, pulses, seeds and roots, become so constantly produced, otherwise than for the purpose of feeding and sustaining living creatures, with pleasure and content? is there not a notorious correspondence between them, and the organs of taste, digestion and nutrition? are there not appetites prompting, yea with intolerable pain provoking each living creature to seek its proper sustenance? and doth it not find in the enjoyment hereof a pleasure and satisfaction unexpressible? Let me add: Whence comes it to pass, that ordinarily in nature nothing occurs noisome or troublesome to any sense, but all things wholesome and comfortable, at least innocent or inoffensive? that we may wander all about without being urged to shut our eyes, to stop our ears, our mouths, our noses; but rather invited to open all the avenues of our soul, for admission of the kind entertainments nature sets before us? doth she not every where present spectacles of delight (somewhat of lively picture, somewhat of gay embroidery, somewhat of elegant symmetry) to our eyes, however seldom any thing appears horrid or ugly to them? where is it that we meet with noises so violent, or so jarring, as to offend our ears? is not there rather provided for us, wherever we go, some kind of harmony grateful to them; not only in fields and woods the sweet chirping of birds, by rivers the soft warbling of the streams, but even the rude winds whistle in a tune not unpleasant; the tossing seas yield a kind of solemn and graver melody? All the air about us, is it not (not only not noisome to our smell, but) very comfortable and refreshing? and doth not even the dirty earth yield a wholesome and medicinal scent? So many, so plain, so exactly congruous are the relations of things here about us each to other; which surely could not otherwise come than from one admirable wisdom and power conspiring thus to adapt and connect them

together.

Εἰ χροῖμα τὰ οὐδὲ πεποιήκη, δὲ-
ναμιν ἢ διατεταμένῳ αὐτῷ μὴ πεποιήκη,
τί ἂν ᾖ ὄφελος; ἔδοτιν' ἀλλ' ἀνά-
παυαν, εἰ τὸ μὲν δύνανται πεποιήκη,
τὰ δὲ μὴ τοιαῦτα, οἷα ὑποτί-
πτεται τῇ δυνάμει τῇ ὁρατικῇ, καὶ ἔγω-
γε τί ᾖ ὄφελος; ἔδοτιν' τί δ' εἰ καὶ
ἀμφοτέρω τὰυτὰ πεποιήκη, οὗς δὲ
μὴ πεποιήκη· εἰ δ' ἔγωγε τί ὄφελος· τίς
ἐν τῷ ἀερόσφαιρι τὸτο πρὸς ἑαυτὸν, καὶ
ἐκείνῳ πρὸς αὐτό. Epict. l. 6.

together; as also from an equal goodness, declared in all these things being squared so fitly for mutual benefit and convenience. These considerations are applicable to all (even to the meaner sorts of) animals; which being the only creatures capable of joy and pleasure, or liable to grief and pain; 'twas fit, that insensible things should be disposed to serve their needs and uses; which hath been with so wonderful a care performed, that of so vast a number among them there is none so vile or contemptible (no worm, no fly, no insect) for whose maintenance, whose defence, whose satisfaction competent (shall I say, or abundant) provision hath not been made, both intrinsecal (by a frame of organs fitting them to obtain and to enjoy what is good for them, to shun and repel what is bad; by strong appetites inciting them to search after and pursue, or to beware and decline respectively; by strange instincts inabling them to distinguish between what is fit for them to procure or embrace, to remove or avoid;) and extrinsecal also, by a great variety of conveniences, answerable to their several desires and needs, dispersed all about, and every where, as it were, offered to them. So that the Holy Psalmist (considering this, and taking upon him to be as it were their Chaplain) had reason to say this grace for them:

Psal. 145. 15. The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season; thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. But especially (that which, as reason enables us, so, due gratitude obliges us, and

Ejus (hominis) causa videtur cuncta alia genuisse natura. Plin. lib. 7. c. 1.

Ut omnis rerum natura pars tributum aliquod nobis conferret. Sen. de Benef. 4. 5.

Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodo nostris provisum est; usque in delicias amamur. Ibid.

Ut interdum Prona nostra Epicurea esse videtur. Cic. de N. D. 2.

prompts us especially to observe) there is an evident regard (so evident, that even *Pliny*, a professed *Epicurean*, could not forbear acknowledging it) which all things bear to man, the Prince of creatures visible; they being all as on purpose ordered to yield tribute unto him; to supply his wants, to gratify his desires; with profit and pleasure to exercise his faculties; to content, as it were, even his humour and curiosity. All things about us do minister (or at least may do so, if we would improve the natural instruments, and the opportunities afforded us) to our preserva-

tion, ease or delight. The hidden bowels of the earth yield us treasures of metals and minerals, quarries of stone and coal, so necessary, so serviceable to divers good uses, that we could not commodiously be without them; the vilest

Vera est Sententia Stoicorum, qui aiunt nostra causa mundum esse constructum. Omnia enim quibus constat, quaque generat ex se mundus, ad utilitatem hominis accommodata sunt. Laët. de Irâ, 13.

and most common stones we tread on (even in that we tread on them) are useful, and serve to many good purposes beside: the surface of the earth, how is it bespread all over, as a table well furnished, with variety of delicate fruits, herbs and grains, to nourish our bodies, to please our tastes, to cheer our spirits, to cure our diseases? how

many fragrant and beautiful flowers offer themselves for the comfort of our smell, and the delight of our sight? neither can our ears complain, since every wood breeds a quire of natural musicians, ready to entertain them with easy and unaffected harmony. The woods, I say, which also adorned with stately trees afford us a pleasant view, and a refreshing shade, shelter from weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our houses and our shipping; with divers other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary to the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance of our wares, and maintaining intercourse among us. Yea the wide seas are not (altogether unprofitable) wastes; but freely yield us, without our tillage, many rich harvests, transmitting our commerce and traffick, furnishing our tables with stores of dainty fish, supplying the bottles of heaven with waters to refresh the earth, being inexhaustible cisterns, from whence our rivers and fountains are derived: The very rude and boisterous winds themselves fulfil

Psal. 148. 8. God's word (which once commanded all things to be good, and approved them to be so) by yielding manifold services to us; in brushing and cleansing the air for our health, in driving forward our ships (which without their friendly help could not stir) in gathering together, in scattering, in spreading abroad the clouds; the clouds, those paths of God, which drop fatness upon our fields and pastures. As for our living subjects, all the inferior sorts of

animals,

animals, 'tis hardly possible to reckon the manifold benefits we receive from them; how many ways they supply our needs with pleasant food, and convenient cloathing; how they ease our labour, how they promote even our recreation and sport. Thus have all things upon this earth (as is fit and seemly they should have) by the wise and gracious disposal of the great Creator, a reference to the benefit of its noblest inhabitant, most worthy and most able to use them; many of them have an immediate reference to man (as necessary to his being, or conducive to his well being; being fitted thereto, to his hand, without his care, skill or labour) others a reference to him, more mediate indeed, yet as reasonable to suppose; I mean such things, whose usefulness doth in part depend upon the exercise of our reason, and the instruments subservient thereto: for what is useful by the help of reason, doth as plainly refer to the benefit of a thing naturally endowed with that faculty, as what is agreeable to sense refers to a thing merely sensitive: we may therefore, for instance, as reasonably suppose, that iron was designed for our use, though first we be put to dig for it, then must employ many arts, and much pains, before it become fit for our use; as that the stones were therefore made, which lie open to our view, and which without any preparation we easily apply to the pavement of our streets, or the raising of our fences: Also, the grain we sow in our grounds, or the trees which we plant in our orchards, we have reason to conceive as well provided for us, as those plants, which grow wildly and spontaneously; for that sufficient means are bestowed on us of compassing such ends, and rendering those things useful to us (a reason able to contrive what is necessary in order thereto, and a hand ready to execute) it being also reasonable, that something should be left for the improvement of our reason, and employment of our industry, lest our noblest powers should languish and decay by sloth, or for want of fit exercise. *Epist. 1. 16.*

—Pater ipse
colendi Haud
facilem esse vi-
am voluit, &c.
—Curis ac-
cus mortalia
corda. Virg.

Well then, is it to a fortuitous necessity (or a necessary chance) that we owe all these choice accommodations and preeminences of nature? must we blest and worship fortune for all this? did she so especially love us, and tender our good? was she so indulgent toward us, so provident for us in so many things, in every thing; making us the scope of all her workings and motions here about us? Must we change style, and say, Fortune pours down blessings on our heads, fortune crowns us with loving kindness, fortune daily loads us with her benefits? Shall we not only esteem these good things her gifts, but even acknowledge our selves her offsprings, and reverence her as our mother; disclaiming so noble a parent, as wisdom omnipotent; disowning so worthy a benefactor, as sovereign goodness? O brutish degeneracy; O hellish depravedness of mind! Are we not, not only wretchedly blind and stupid, if we are not able to discern so clear beams of wisdom shining through so many perspicuous correspondences, if we cannot trace the divine power by footsteps so express and remarkable, if we cannot read so legible characters of transcendent goodness; but extremely unworthy and ingrateful, if we are not ready to acknowledge, and with hearty thankfulness to celebrate all these excellent perceptions, by which all these things have been so ordered, as to conspire and co-operate for our benefit? Methinks the very perception of so much good, the continual enjoyment of so many accommodations, the frequent satisfaction of so many senses and appetites, should put us in so good humour, that when we feel our hearts replenished with food and gladness, when we so delightfully relish nature's dainties, when we with pleasure view this fair scene of things, when our ears are ravished with harmonious sounds, when our spirits are exhilarated with those natural perfumes shed about our gardens, our woods, and our fields, we should not be able to forbear devoutly crying out with the Psalmist; O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches: The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy and bounty: Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him? that Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things under his feet? Under his feet; and such in a manner, according to proper and direct meaning, are all those things which we have as yet touched upon; so many arguments of the Divinity, even looking downwards, as it were,

Οὐχ ἰαυτῶν
ἀμείβεσθαι
ἀφ' αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ
δοξαίω, &c.
Acts 14. 17.

Acts 14. 17.

Psal. 104. 24.
—119. 64.
—33. 5.

Psal. 8. 4.

—144. 3.

were, (if we do not so look rather like beasts than men) we may upon this little spot of our habitation perceive: But if, employing our peculiar advantage, we lift up our eyes and minds towards heaven, there in a larger volume and in a brighter character, we shall behold the testimonies of perfection, and majesty stupendous, described: As our eyes are dazzled with the radiant light coming thence, so must the vast amplitude, the stately beauty, the decent order, the steady course, the beneficial efficacy of those glorious lamps, astonish our minds, fixing their attention upon them: He that shall, I say, consider with what precise regularity, and what perfect constancy those (beyond our imagination) vast bodies perform their rapid motions, what pleasure, comfort and advantage their light and heat do yield us, how their kindly influences conduce to the general preservation of all things here below (impregnating the womb of this cold and dull lump of earth with various sorts of life, with strange degrees of activity) how necessary (or how convenient at least) the certain recourses of seasons made by them are; how can we but wonder, and wondering adore that transcendancy of beneficent wisdom and power, which first disposed them into, which still preserves them in such a state and order?

*Ordo autem siderum, & in omni
aeternitate constantia neque naturam
significat, est enim plena rationis, ne-
que fortunam, quae amica varietati
constantiam respuit. Cic. de Nat. D.
2. p. 68.*

2. p. 68.
Οὐδὲποτε ἐν ἐν χειμῶνι μακρὰ
γίγονεν ἡ ἡμέρα, ὥστε ἐλπίσει ἐν
ἐξῆς μακρὰ γίγονεν ἡ νύξ, τοσούτων
παρελθόντων γιγνόν, ἀλλὰ ἐν τοσούτῳ
διασῆμασι ἡ μήνη, ἐπὶ ἀκασαίων,
εὐχ ἡμῶν, ἐκ πάλιν ὁδοκαμνὴ ἡ ἐπί-
εως τὴν ἐπίεως ἐπλεονέκησας. Chryl.
Λυδ. 3.

* Αἱ τε γὰρ ἡλιος καὶ σελήνη, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῆς ἀστρον. τῶν ἀπογόνων πο-
 ρεῖν ἐκχύνοντα, ἡμῶν ἀνταλλάτ-
 τοις χρεώμασιν, ἵσα ὅ τοις μεγέθεσι,
 καὶ χτ' ὅτοις, καὶ χτ' ἡρίους τὸς αὐτοῖς.
 Plut. de plac. 1. 6.

Pfal. 147.5,6.

Isa. 40. 26.

& 45. 12.
Dec. 1. 24

Dan. 4. 35.
Neh. 9. 6.

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Qui bunc hominem dixerit, qui eam
tam certos cali moris, tam ratos astro-
rum ordines, tamque inter se connexa,
& apta viderit, negat his ullam infa-
rationem, eaque casu fieri dicat, qua
quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio
assequi possumus. Cic. de Nat. D. 2.
pag. 90.

*Quid potest esse tam apertum, tam-
que perspicuum, cum eam suspeximus,
caeliique contemplati sumus, quam a-
liquod esse numen praestantissima ven-
tis, qua haec regantur. Ibid. p. 53.*

Ἰησοῦς πάλιν ἔειπεν· καὶ ταπεινῶς,
 ὡς ἦσαν αὐτοὶ ἑστῆτες, ὁρῶν ἃ ἐλάττωον
 τὰ ὄψιν, ὁρῶν ἃ ποταπῶν ὁλῶν εὐχε-
 σίαν αὐτοῖς ἀπέκρινεν, καὶ ἡμεῖς καὶ συ-
 τὸς ἀδιδάκτους πάντας, ἡμεῖς καὶ αὐτο-
 ματὸς ταῦτα πάντα γινώσκω, ἀλλὰ μὴ πε-
 σκύνειν ἃ γινώσκω ταῦτα μὴ σοφίας
 ἢ σοφιστικῆς διακρίσειν. Chryl.

That all of them should be so regulated, as for so many ages together (even thorough all memories of time) to persist in the same posture, to retain the same appearances: not to alter discernibly in magnitude, in shape, in situation, in distance each from other; but to abide fixed (as it were) in their unfixedness, and steady in their restless motions; not to vary at all sensibly in the time of their revolution (so that one year was ever observed to differ in an hour, or one day in a minute from another) doth it not argue a constant will directing them, and a mighty hand upholding them? it did so (*Plutarch* tells us) to the common apprehensions of men in ancient times, who from these observations deduced the existence and notion of a God; because (saith he) * *they took notice that the sun, the moon, and the rest of the stars, taking their course about the earth, did constantly arise alike in their colours, equal in their bignesses, in the same places, and at the same times.* Reason dictated

inspired Psalmist sings concerning the heavenly host; that *and they were created; he hath also stablished them for ever and ever that shall not pass.* And surely, those celestial squadrons march'd in a form so proper, and march on so regularly without and without the conduct of a most skilful captain. He that would be all this to an undisciplined and uncondacted troop of men, and down confusedly through the field of infinite space; it is as easily assert, or admit? certainly, he that can think so, and labour were vainly spent in farther endeavour to convince. Pagan Philosophers have judg'd, upon whom what impression this consideration hath made, we may learn from

these words of one among them, Cicero: *Who* (saith he) *would call him a man, that beholding such certain motions of heaven, thus settled ranks of stars, all things there so connected and suited together, should deny there were a reason in them, or should affirm these things were done by chance, which by no understanding we can reach with how great counsel they are performed? And, what other thing* (adds he) *can be so open and so perspicuous, to us that shall behold the heavens, and contemplate things celestial, as that there is a most excellent Divinity, by which these things are governed? Thus do* * *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work; yea thus have we reason to acknowledge with Nehemiah, †Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with*

* Plal. 19. 1. † Neh. 9. 6. Ma. 37. 16.

all

all their hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all. Thus every thing above and below us, before and behind, on this, on that, on every side of us, yields more than a simple attestation to the existence of its glorious maker; each of them singly, several of them together giving their vote and suffrage thereto.

III. Yea, which was the last consideration intimated, All of them join together in one universal consort, with one harmonious voice, to proclaim one and the same wisdom to have designed, one and the same power to have produced, one and the same goodness to have set both wisdom and power on work in designing, and in producing their being, in preserving and governing it: for this whole System of things, what is it, but one goodly body (as it were) compacted of several members and organs, so aptly compacted together, that each confers its being, and its operation, to the grace and ornament, to the strength and stability of the whole; One soul (of divine providence) enlivening in a manner, and actuating it all? Survey it all over, and we shall have reason to say with the Philosopher, *All the parts of the world are so constituted, that they could not be either better for use, nor more beautiful for shew.* In it we shall espy nothing in substance superfluous, or defective; nothing in shape deformed, in position misplaced, in motion exorbitant, so as to prejudice the beauty or welfare of the whole. We may perhaps not discern the use of each part, or the tendency of each particular effect; but of many they are so plain and palpable, that reason obliges us to suppose the like of the rest. Even as a person whom we observe frequently to act with great consideration and prudence, when at other times we cannot penetrate the drift of his proceedings, we must yet imagine that he hath some latent reason, some reach of policy, that we are not aware of: Or, as in an engine consisting of many parts, curiously combined, whereof we do perceive the general use, and apprehend how divers parts thereof conduce thereto, reason prompts us (although we neither see them all, nor can comprehend the immediate serviceableness of some) to think they are all in some way or other subservient to the Artift's design; such an agent is God, the wisdom of whose proceedings being in so many instances notorious, we ought to suppose it answerable in the rest; such an engine is this World, of which we may easily enough discern the general end, and how many of its parts do conduce thereto; and cannot therefore in reason but suppose the rest in their kind alike congruous, and conducive to the same purpose: Our incapacity to discover all doth not argue any defect, but an excess of wisdom in the design thereof; not too little perfection in the work, but too great an one rather in respect to our capacity: however we plainly see the result of all to be the durable continuance of things, without interruption, or change, in the same constant uniform state; which shews, that in the world there is no seed of corruption (as it were) no inclination to dissolution or decay, nothing that tends to the discomposure or destruction of the whole: Each ingredient thereof (of those so unconceivably numerous) consists within its proper limits; not encroaching immoderately upon, not devouring or disturbing another in its course; contrary qualities therein serving to a due temperament, opposite inclinations begetting a just poise; particular vicissitudes conferring to a general settlement; private Deaths and corruptions maintaining the publick life and health, producing a kind of youthful vigour in the whole: So that six thousand years together hath this great *Machine* stood, always one and the same, unimpaired in its beauty, unworn in its parts, unwearied and undisturbed in its motions.

Quocumque te steteris, ibi Deum videris occurrentem tibi, &c. Sen. de Benef. 4. 8.

ἡτοιμασεν ὡς ἀγαθὸς τὸ χεῖρον, ὡς σοφὸς τὸ καλλίον, ὡς δυνατὸς τὸ μίγνυν. Bar. Hexaem. λ. α.

Omnes mundi partes ita constituta sunt, ut neque ad usum meliores potuerint esse, nec ad speciem pulchriores. Cic. de Nat. Deor. 2. pag. 85.

Μὴδὲν ἢ οὐσίᾳ ποιεῖ μάτρω, μὴδὲ ἀπολείπει ἐξ ἀναγκῶν. Arist. 3. de Anima, cap. 10.

ῥύσεις, καὶ ἀλλοιώσεις ἀναγκῶν ἢ κόσμον διλυκῶς. Anton. 6. 15. 12. 13.

Αἱ μὲν γενέσεις ἐπαναβάλλουσι τὰς φθοράς, αἱ δὲ φθοραὶ κυρίως τὰς γενέσεις· μία δ' ἐν παντὶ περινομήνων σωτηρία διατελεῖ. Aug. de Mund. cap. 5.

Omnia periculo servantur; omnia de interitu reformantur, &c. Tertull. Apol. cap. 48.

Ὁ μέγας καὶ θαυμαστός καὶ μεγαλειότητι αὐτοῦ κυριεύς. Greg. Naz. Or. 43.

Ἐκαστὸν μὲν καθάπερ τιμὴ χαλκῷ καὶ δεσμῷ τοῦ βυλῆματι τῷ ποιῆσαι τὰς οὐκείας διαφυλάττον δέους, καὶ ἡ μάχη τῶν εἰρήνης αἰτία γίνεταί. Chrys. Orat. 47, 48. Tom. 6.

Οὐδὲν γὰρ καλὸν αἰὲν ὡς τύχῃ
γίνεται, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τῆς τέχνης
δημιουργίας. Plut. de plac. i. 6.
Quod si mundum efficere potest con-
cursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur
templum, cur domum, cur urbem non
potest, quæ sunt multo minus operosa,
Et multo quidem faciliora? Cic. 2.
de Natur. Deor. pag. 89.
Κόσμος καλὸν ποικίλμα τέκτορος
σοφῆ. Eurip.

Cic. 2. de Nat. Deor. pag. 89.
Ἀεστεύχνης. Epitheton Dei.
Pind.

Rom. i. 20.

which Saying we cannot better render or express, than in St. Paul's words, *The invisible things of God by the making (or rather by the make and constitution) of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that, I adjoin after him, they are inexcusable, who from hence do not know God; or knowing him, do not render unto him his due glory and service.*

If then (as Plutarch says) *no fair thing is ever produced by hazard, but with art framing it*; how could this most fair comprehension of all fair things be not the lawful issue of art, but a by-blow of fortune; of fortune, the mother only of broods monstrous and mishapen. If the nature of any cause be discoverable by its effects; if from any work we may infer the workman's ability; if in any case the results of wisdom are distinguishable from the consequences of chance, we have reason to believe, that the Architect of this magnificent and beautiful frame was one incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good Being; and to conclude with Cicero, *Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, & eam suspiciendam adorandamque hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cælestium cogit confiteri*; the sense of

I Believe in God.

SERMON VII.

THE BEING of GOD Proved from the FRAME of HUMANE NATURE.

GEN. 1. 27.

*So God created Man in his own Image; in the Image of God created
he him.*

THE belief of God's existence is the foundation of all Religion, if which be not well laid in our minds by convincing reasons, the superstructures standing thereon may easily be in danger of being shaken and ruined; especially being assailed by the winds of temptation and opposition, which every where blow so violently in this irreligious age. No discourses therefore can perhaps be more needful (or seasonably useful) than such as do produce and urge reasons of that kind, apt to establish that foundation. Of such there be, I conceive, none better, or more suitable to common capacity, than those, which are drawn from effects apparent to mens general observation and experience, the which cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other cause, than unto God, that is (according to the notion commonly answering to that name) to a Being incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good. Of such effects there be innumerable many in this sensible world among things natural, more strictly so called, that is, subsisting and acting without immediate use of understanding or choice; the constitutions and operations of which (being evidently directed according to very much reason, and to very good purpose) do evince their being framed and ordered by such a Being; as I have formerly, with a competent largeness, endeavoured to shew. But beside those, there is exposed to our observation, yea subject to our inward conscience, another sort of beings, acting in another manner, and from other principles; having in them a spring of voluntary motion and activity; not, as the rest, necessarily determined, or driven on, by a kind of blind violence, in one direct road to one certain end; but guiding themselves with judgment and choice by several ways toward divers ends; briefly, endued with reason to know what and why, and with liberty

erty to chuse what and how they should act; And that this sort of beings (that is, we our selves, all mankind) did proceed from the same source, or original cause, as it is in way of history delivered and affirmed in our Text, so I shall now endeavour by reason (apt to perswade even those, who would not allow this sacred authority) to shew. Indeed, if the *eternal power, and divinity of God may* (as St. Paul tells us) *be seen in all the works of God*; the same peculiarly and principally will appear observable in this master-piece as it were of the great Artificer; if the meanest creatures reflect somewhat of light, by which we may discern the divine existence and perfections; in this fine and best polished mirrour, we shall more clearly discover the same: no where so much of God will appear as in this work, which was designedly formed to resemble and represent him. This then is the subject of our present discourse, That in man well considered we may discern manifest footsteps of that incomprehensibly excellent Being impressed upon him; and this doubly, both in each man singly taken, and in men as standing in conjunction or relation to each other: considering man's nature, we shall have reason to think it to have proceeded from God; considering humane societies, we shall see cause to suppose them designed and governed by God.

I. Consider we first any one single man, or that humane nature abstractedly, whereof each individual person doth partake; and whereas that doth consist of two parts, one material and external, whereby man becomes a sensible part of nature, and hath an eminent station among visible creatures; the other, that interior and invisible principle of operations peculiarly called humane: As to the former, we did, among other such parts of nature, take cognizance thereof; and even in that discovered plain marks of a great wisdom that made it, of a great goodness taking care to maintain it. The other now we shall chiefly consider, in which we may discern not only *σημεία*, but *δυναμίσματα* of the divine existence and efficiency; not only large tracks, but express footsteps; not only such signs as smoke is of fire, or a picture of the painter that drew it; but even such, as the spark is of fire, and the picture of its original.

1. And first, that man's nature did proceed from some efficient cause, it will (as of other things in nature) be reasonable to suppose. For if not so, then it must either spring up of it self, so that at some determinate beginning of time, or from all eternity, some one man, or some number of men, did of themselves exist; or there hath been a succession, without beginning, of continual generations indeterminate (not terminated in any root, one or more of singular persons.)

Now generally that man did not at any time in any manner spring up of himself, appears, 1. from history and common tradition; which (as we shall elsewhere largely shew) deliver the contrary: being therein more credible than bare conjecture or precarious assertion, destitute of testimony or proof. 2. From the present constant manner of man's production, which is not by spontaneous emergency, but in way of successive derivation, according to a method admirably provided for by nature. 3. Because if ever man did spring up of himself, it should be reasonable that at any time, that often, that at least sometime in so long a course of times the like should happen, which yet no experience doth attest. 4. There is an evident relation between our bodies and souls; the members and organs of our bodies being wonderfully adapted to serve the operations of our souls. Now in our bodies (as we have before shewed) there appear plain arguments of a most wise Author, that contrived and framed them; therefore in no likelihood did our souls arise of themselves, but owe their being to the same wise cause.

Also particularly, that not any men did at some beginning of time spring up of themselves, is evident, because there is even in the thing it self a repugnance; and it is altogether unconceivable, that any thing, which once hath not been, should ever come to be, without receiving its being from another; and supposing such a rise of any thing, there could not in any case be any need of an efficient cause; since any thing might purely out of nothing come to be of it self.

Neither

Neither could any man so exist from eternity, both from the general reasons assigned, which being grounded in the nature of the thing, and including no respect to this circumstance of now and then, do equally remove this supposition (for what is in it self unapt, or unnecessary, or improbable to be now, was always alike so; the being from eternity, or in time not altering the nature of the thing) and also particularly, because there are no footsteps, or monuments of man's (not to say eternal but even) ancient standing in the world; but rather many good arguments (other where touched) of his late coming thereinto; which consideration did even convince *Epicurus* and his Followers, and made them acknowledge man to be a novel production. I add, seeing it is necessary to suppose some eternal and self-subsistent Being distinct from man, and from any other particular sensible being (for there is no such being, which in reason can be supposed author of the rest; but rather all of them bear characters signifying their original from a Being more excellent than themselves) and such an one being admitted, there is no need or reason to suppose any other; (especially Man and all others appearing unapt so to subsist) therefore it is not reasonable to ascribe eternal self-subsistence to Man. This discourse I confirm with the suffrage of *Aristotle* himself; who in his *Physicks* hath these words:

In natural things that which is definite, and better, if possible, must rather exist: but it suffices, that one, the first of things immovable, being eternal, should be to others the original of motion; (I subjoin and, by parity of reason, it is sufficient that one and the best thing be eternally subsistent of it self; and the cause of subsistence to the rest.)

Ἐν τοῖς φύσιν δὲ τὸ πεπερασμένον, καὶ τὸ ἐλάχιστον, ἐν ἐνδεχόμενῳ, ἀρχὴν μᾶλλον ἢ ἄλλον ἢ ἑαυτὸν, τὸ πρῶτον καὶ αἰώνιον, ἀδύνατον δὲ εἶναι τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀρχὴν κινήσεως. Phys. 8. 7.

As for the last supposition, that there have been indeterminate successions of men, without beginning, it is also liable to most of the former exceptions, beside that it is altogether unintelligible, and its having this peculiar difficulty in it, that it ascribes determinate effects to causes indeterminate. And indeed it hath been to no other purpose introduced, than to evade the arguments arising from the nature of the thing, by confounding the matter with impertinent intrigues, such as the terms of infinite and indeterminate must necessarily produce in man's shallow understanding. I therefore upon such grounds assume it as a reasonable supposition, that man's nature is no wife * *ἐντελής*, but hath proceeded from some cause.

2. I adjoin *secondly*, that it could not come from any sensible or material cause, nor from any complication of such causes; for that the properties, the powers, the operations of man's soul are wholly different from in kind, highly elevated in worth above all the properties, powers and operations of things corporeal, in what imaginable manner soever framed or tempered: the properties, faculties and operations of our souls are, or refer to several sorts or ways of knowledge (sense, fancy, memory, discourse, mental intuition) of willing (that is of appetite toward and choice of good, or of disliking and refusing evil) of passion (that is of sensible complacency or displeasure in respect to good and evil apprehended under several notions and circumstances) of *ἐντελέχεια* or self-moving (the power and act of moving without any force extrinsecal working upon it.) The general properties of things corporeal are extension according to several dimensions and figures; aptness to receive motion from, or to impart motion unto each other in several degrees and proportions of velocity; to divide, and unite; or to be divided, and united each by other; and the like coherent with and resulting from those: now to common sense it seems evident, that those properties, and these are *totā genere* different from each other; nor have any conceivable similitude unto, connexion with, dependence upon each other, as to their immediate nature. Let any part of this corporeal mass be refined by the subtlest division, let it be agitated by the quickest motion, let it be modell'd into what shape or fashion you please, how can any man imagine either knowledge, or appetite, or passion thence to result? or that it should thence acquire a power of moving it self, or another adjacent body? Even, I say, this inferior locomotive faculty is too high for matter by any change it can undergo

(* hath not sprung up of it self.)

dergo to obtain: for we (as inward experience, or conscience of what we do may teach us) determine our selves commonly to action, and move the corporeal instruments subject to our will and command, not by force of any precedent bodily impression, or impulse, but either according to mere pleasure, or in virtue of somewhat spiritual and abstracted from matter, acting upon us, not by a physical energy, but by moral representation, in a manner more easily conceived than expressed; (for no man surely is so dull, that he cannot perceive a huge difference between being dragg'd by a violent hand, and drawn to action by a strong reason; although it may puzzle him to express that difference) such a proposition of truth, such an apprehension of events possible, such an appearance of good or evil consequent (things no where existent without us, nor having in them any thing of corporeal subsistence; nor therefore capable of corporeal operation) are all the engines that usually impel us to action; and these by a voluntary application of our minds (by collecting and digesting, severing and rejecting, fitting and moulding the present single representations of things, by an immediate interior power, independent from any thing without us) we frame within our selves. And even such self-moving, or self-determining power we cannot any wise conceive to be in, or to arise from any part of this corporeal mass, however shaped or sized, however situated or agitated: much less can we well apprehend the more noble faculties to be seated in, or to spring from it; of them the grossest and the finest, the slowest and the nimblest, the roughest and the smoothest bodies are alike capable, or rather alike incapable. To think a gross body may be ground and pounded into rationality, a slow body may be thumpte and driven into passion, a rough body may be filed and polished into a faculty of discerning and resenting things; that a cluster of pretty thin round atoms (as *Democritus* forsooth conceited) that a well mixt combination of elements (as *Empedocles* fancied) that a harmonious contemperation (or *crasis*) of humours (as *Galen*, dreaming it seems upon his drugs and his potions, would persuade us) that an implement made up of I know not what fine springs, and wheels, and such mechanick knacks (as some of our modern wizards have been busie in divining) should without more to do become the subject of so rare capacities and endowments, the author of actions so worthy, and works so wonderful; capable of wisdom and vertue, of knowledge so vast, and of desires so lofty; apt to contemplate truth, and affect good; able to recollect things past, and to foresee things future; to search so deep into the causes of things, and disclose so many mysteries of nature; to invent so many arts and sciences, to contrive such projects, of policy, and atchieve such feats of prowess; briefly should become capable to design, undertake and perform all those admirable effects of humane wit and industry which we daily see and hear; how senseless and absurd conceits are these; how can we, without great indignation and regret entertain such suppositions? No, no; 'tis both ridiculous fondness, and monstrous baseness for us to own any parentage from, or any alliance to things so mean, so very much below us. 'Tis indeed observable, that no man can well, or scarce any man hath disowned the receiving his being from God, but hath also in a manner disavowed his own being what he is; that no man denying God, hath not also withal denied himself; denied himself to be a man; renounced his reason, his liberty, and other perfections of his nature; rather than acknowledge himself so well descended, hath been ready to confess himself no more than a beast, yea much less than probably beasts are; a mere corporeal machine, a ball of fate and chance, a thing violently tost and tumbled up and down by bodies all about in. But let these degenerate men vilifie their own nature, and disparage themselves as they please, yet those noble perfections of our souls speak its extraction from a higher stock; we cannot if we consider them well, but acknowledge that,

Arist. de An.
1. 2.

Mentem à caelesti demissam traximus arce;

or as *Epicharmus* said of old, that *man's reason did sprout from the divine reason*; they plainly discover their original to be from a cause it self understanding and knowing, willing freely, resenting things (if I may so speak) and moving of it self in a more excellent manner and degree.

And indeed it is very considerable to our purpose, that while we assert the existence of God, we assert no other thing to be, than such (as) whereof we can assign a manifest instance or example (as it were) although in degree much inferior; for what can in any degree exist, 'tis not hard to conceive that possible to exist in any degree, how high soever; what is in kind possible, is in any perfection of degree possible; yea what we see in a lower degree somewhere to exist, doth probably elsewhere exist in higher perfection. There is therefore scarce any attribute commonly ascribed to God, the existence whereof we cannot shew possible, yea very credible, by shewing some degree (I use this word in a large and popular sense, not regarding Scholastical nicety) some participation, some semblance (or if you please, some shadow) thereof discernible in man; he being indeed a small picture, as it were, wherein God hath drawn and represented himself, giving us to read that of himself in this small volume, which in its proper character and size we could never be able to apprehend; each letter, each line of his excellency being in it self too large for our eye perfectly to view and comprehend.

3. We are (I say) not only God's works, but his children; our souls bearing in their countenance and complexion divers express features of him; especially as at first they were made, and as by improvement of our capacities they may again become. In the substance of man's soul, in its union with things corporeal, in its properties and powers we may observe divers such resemblances, declaring it in a manner to be what *Seneca* did say of it, a little God harboured in humane body. For as God (inhabiting light inaccessible) being himself invisible, and subject to no sense, discovers himself by manifold effects of wisdom and power, so doth our soul, it self immediately exposed to no sense, shew it self by many works of art and industry, wherein she imitates nature, and the works of God; although her works in fineness and greatness do indeed come infinitely short of his.

As God by his presence and influence doth (as the Philosopher speaks) contain, and keep together the whole frame of things; so that he withdrawing them, it would fall of it self into corruption and ruine; So doth the soul by its union and secret energy upon the body connect the parts of its body, and preserve it from dissolution, which presently, they being removed, do follow.

As he in a manner beyond our conception, without any proper extension, or composition of parts doth co-exist with, penetrateth, and passeth through all things; * So is she, in a manner also unconceivable, every where present within her bounds, and penetrates all the dimensions of her little world.

As He incomprehensibly by a word of his mind, or by a mere act of will doth move the whole frame or any part of nature; so doth she, we cannot tell how, by thinking only, and by willing weild her body, and determine any member thereof to motion.

As He, not confined by the extension or duration of things, doth at one simple view behold all things, not only present, but past and future; yea whenever, wherever, however possible; So doth she making wide excursions out of her narrow mansion in an instant, as it were, or with a marvellous agility transcend any fixed bounds

M

Ο γὰρ ὁ θεὸς
ἵστανται λόγους
ἑαυτῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ
θεοῦ λόγους.
Epic. Cl. A.
lex. Ser. 5.
pag. 441.

— quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est & mun-
dus in ipsis.
Exemplumque Dei quicquid est in ima-
gine parva. Manli. 4.

Trismeg. x. Ἀνδραγαθίαν ἔχειν, ἢ
ἀνδραγαθίαν ἐμμελεῖν, ἢ ἀνδραγαθίαν
ἐμμελεῖν, ἢ ἀνδραγαθίαν ἐμμελεῖν,
ἀνδραγαθίαν.

Deus in humano corpore hospitans.

Quem in hoc mundo locum Deus obti-
net, hunc in homine animam; quod est
illuc materia, id in nobis corpus est.
Sen. Ep. 65.

Deum te scito esse: siquidem Deus
est, qui viget, qui sentit, qui meminit,
qui providet, qui tam regit, & movet,
& moderatur id corpus, cui prepositus
est, quàm hunc mundum principi ille
Deus: & ut ipsum mundum ex quadam
parte mortalem Deus aternus, sic fragi-
le corpus animus sempiternus movet.
Cic. in Somn. Scip.

Πανταχὺ παρὰ ὅλον. Arist. de
mundo.

Ἄλλοι δὲ λέγουσιν τὸ πᾶν οὐρανόν
ἐκείνου εἶναι διατεταμένον ὡς σῶμα.
Arist. de An. 1. 9.

* Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῖς ἑσπερίαις κινή-
μασι παρὰ τὰς ἐσπερίαις ἐκτεταμένη τῷ
κόσμῳ, ἐμμελεῖται τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ὡς ἡ
ἐκείνου ἐκτεταμένη, ὡς τὸ πᾶν τοῦ
κόσμου ἐκτεταμένη, &c. Gr. Nyl.
Cat. c. 10.

Magna & generosa res est humanus
animus, in tantum se extendit, nec
ullos sibi ponit nisi communes cum Deo
terminos patitur. Sen. Ep. 102.

Πᾶς μετὰ τὸν χρόνον, ὡς ὁ χρόνος ἐκτε-
τατός, ὡς τὰ πάντα ἐκτετατά ἐκτε-
τατός; Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

of

of time or place; surveys in her thought the most remote regions, stopping no where, and passing over the world's bounds into spaces void and imaginary; reviews ages long since past, and looks forward into those long after to come; sees things in their causes, and as it were beyond them, even the possibilities of things that never shall be.

Ὁ δὲ εἰς ἑαυτὴν
πάντα ποιεῖ.
Arist.

As He performs nothing rashly or vainly, but always with wisest design to the best end; so doth she never set her self on action without some drift, or aim at good apparent to her.

Τὰς αἰσθητικὰς καὶ ἀλογικὰς κινήσεις
ἀνθρώπου, ζῶν λογικὴν συνέστησεν,
καὶ συνείδησι μυστικῶς τε καὶ ἀρρήτως
τὴν τῶ νοῦ, καὶ τὴν τῶ πνεύματος.
Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

Ἐν οὗτοι ἀδυνατῶν ὑπερῶν αὐτῇ
κίνησιν. de An. 1. 3. ἀπαθήσας, de An.
1. 5. 3. 5, 6, &c. ἀμύνης ἀπλῆς. 3.
6, &c.

As He among all the agitations and changes of things without him abides himself immovable, impassible and immutable; so is she, immediately at least, not disturbed, not altered, not affected by the various motions that surround her; they do not touch her; they cannot stir her; among the many tumults and tempests blustering all about her she can retain a steady calm and rest; (Aristotle himself concluded her to be unmoveable, impassible, unmixed and uncompounded.) So fair characters are there of the divine nature engraven upon man's soul; but one chief

property thereof we have not as yet touched; whereof (alas!) the lineaments are more faint and less discernible; they being in themselves originally most tender and delicate, and thence apt by our unhappy degeneration to suffer the most, and have thence accordingly been most defaced; Goodness I mean; whereof yet, I shall not doubt to say, many goodly reliques are extant, and may be observed therein. There do remain dispersed in the soil of humane nature divers seeds of goodness, of benignity, of ingenuity, which being cherished, excited and quickned by good culture do, to common experience, thrust out flowers very lovely, yield fruits very pleasant of virtue and goodness. We see that even the generality of men are prone to approve

Qua autem natio non comitatem, non
benignitatem, non gratum animum, &
beneficii memoriam diligit? qua super-
bos, qua maleficos, qua crudeles, qua
ingratos non aspernatur, non odit?
Cic. de Leg. 1. pag. 305.

like, who are so addicted to themselves, as to be backward to do good to others. Yea no man can act according to those rules of justice and goodness without satisfaction of mind; no man can do against them with-
Rom. 2. 15. out inward self-condemnation and regret (as St. Paul did observe for us.)

Quid tam laudabile, quid tam aqua-
liter in omnium animos receptum, quid
referre bene meritis gratiam? Sen. de
Benef. 4. 16.

Huic uni rei non posuimus legem,
tandem facis natura cavisset. Ibid.
4. 17.

No man hardly is so savage, in whom the receiving kindnesses doth not beget a kindly sense, and an inclination (eo nomine, for that cause barely) to return the like; which inclination cannot well be ascribed to any other principle than somewhat of ingenuity innate to man.

All men (I suppose) feel in themselves (if at least not harden'd by villanous custom) a disposition prompting them to commiserate, yea (even with some trouble, and some damage to themselves) to succour and relieve them who are in want, pain, or any distress; even mere strangers and such from whom they can expect no return of benefit or advantage to themselves.

Vicit amor pa-
triae, laudum
que cupido.

Many examples occur in experience and in history of men, who from dictates of common reason, and natural inclinations (which in this case are not to be separated, both arising from the same source of humane nature) have been very apt freely and liberally to impart unto others somewhat of any good thing they possessed; to sacrifice their own ease, pleasure, profit unto others benefit; to undergo great pains and hazards for publick good (the good of their family, of their friends, of their countrey, of mankind in general) and all this without any hope of recompence; except perhaps that commonly they might have some regard to the approbation and acceptance, to the good will and gratitude of them, whom their beneficence obliged; which in real esteem is no great derogation to their noble performances; and

ing, nor his ear filled with hearing) he never rests content with, but in a manner despises the notions already acquired; always striving to enlarge and enrich his mind with intellectual treasure. So doth he tend nearer to divine omniscience.

And as his searches after truth, so his desires of good are in a manner boundless. No present, no definite good can long detain his liking, or fully content him: he soon doth suck it dry, and leaves it insipid; then longs and haunts after fresh entertainments: he seems poor to himself in the greatest plenty, and straitned in the most ample condition. In short, he ever aspires to somewhat more great and high than what he enjoys; finding in himself a kind of infinite (at least indefinite) ambition and covetousness, a restless tendency after farther degrees of joy and happiness; so doth he shoot himself on toward that highest mark of divine felicity.

Being sensible of his own mortal and transitory condition, he yet seeks to live for ever in his name and memory, labours to perform memorable actions, rears lasting monuments of his art and knowledge, of his wealth and power, of his bounty and munificence, by all means studying and striving to commend himself to the regard of posterity; thus affects he another sort of likeness unto God, even a kind of immortality and eternity.

If also being, through divine grace, awakened out of that drowsy state (which naturally in great measure hath seized upon all men) he discovereth his moral or spiritual wants and imperfections; he is then apt to breath and endeavour a nearer similitude to God, even in goodness, righteousness and purity; to labour in getting continually his inclinations more rectified, and his passions better composed; in restraining, subduing, destroying inordinate self-love, with the sensuality, the perverseness, the pride, the malice growing from that evil root; in promoting all vertuous desires and affections, especially reverence toward God his father, and charity toward man his brother; neither then can he be at ease or well content, till he arrive in such dispositions of mind to that nearness of perfection which his capacities do admit. And a man thus qualified in degree, thus tending in desire toward higher perfection in goodness, is indeed the most lively image that can be framed of God; being

as ἐμύνασιν.
Colof. 3. 10.

Otig. in Cell.
Testimonium
anima natura-
liter religiosa.
Tertull.

Animal religi-
onis capax.
Animus—hoc
habet argu-
mentum divi-
nitatis suae,
quod illum di-
vina delectant.
Sen. Nat.
quasi. 1. praef.

* Arist. de An. 1. 2. γυναικας
ὁμοίω ὁμοίον.
1 Cor. 2. 14.
Quis calum possit nisi cali munere nosse,
Et repertus Deum nisi qui pars ipse
decorum est? Manil. lib. 2.

(as St. Paul expresseth it) renewed to an acknowledgment (or better understanding of himself, of his maker, of true goodness) according to the image of him that made him. I might also propound to your consideration that *εὐαγγελία* (as one of our Fathers doth call it) that natural proclivity observable in man to acknowledge and worship God; to embrace religion both in opinion and practice, and especially on all occasions of need or distress to have recourse unto him, as an argument of his relation to God. 'Tis we see common in nature for all creatures to be readily acquainted with their parents, to run after them, to expect from them supply of wants, succour in straits, refuge and defence in dangers; from hence we may easily discern to what parent any child belongs: And since there appears the like instinct and capacity innate to man (and indeed to him alone, whence some Philosophers thought good from this property to define man, a creature capable of religion) since he is apt to entertain notions of God, to bear in his mind awe and respect toward him; since he is ready in all his straits (when other helps and hopes fail him) to lift up his heart and voice toward heaven for assistance; why may we not in like manner hence discern, and with like reason infer, that man is also in especial manner God's child and off-spring?

I might also adjoin, that the very power of framing conceptions, although imperfect and inadequate, concerning God, is in it self a faculty so very spiritual and sublime, that it argues something divine in man's soul. * That like is known by its like, was an axiome among ancient Philosophers; and that spiritual things are spiritually discerned, is the rule of a better Master in wisdom than they: And beasts surely, because not indued with reason, have no conceptions concerning man's nature, or the matters proper to him, (according to what rules, by what methods, to what purposes he doth act) so in likelihood should we not be able to apprehend and discourse

discourse about things appertaining to God, his nature, the methods and reasons of his proceedings; the notions of eternal truth, the indispensable laws of right, the natural differences of good and evil, with such like high objects of thought, except our souls had in them some sparks of divine understanding; some cognation with and communion from heaven.

I shall to these only subjoin one farther consideration worth attending to, that the wisest and most considerate men in several times, only by reflecting upon their own minds, and observing in them what was most lovely and excellent, most pure and streight, have fallen upon and conspired in notions concerning God, very sutable to those which we believe taught us by revelation; although contrary to the prejudices of their education, and to popular conceits: many admirable passages to this purpose we may find drop from the mouth of *Socrates*, and the pen of *Plato*; in *Cicero*, in *Epictetus*, yea in the least credulous or fanciful of men, *Aristotle* himself. Whence plainly enough we may collect how near affinity there is between God and us; how legible characters of the divinity are written upon our souls; how easily we may know God, if we be not ignorant of our selves; that we need not go far to fetch arguments to prove that God is, nor to find lessons to learn what he is; since we always carry both about us, or rather within us; since our souls could indeed come from no other than such a being, whom they so resemble and represent.

I have indulged my thoughts somewhat freely in this speculation, yet I hope not altogether impertinently, for that (as I before alledged) in the chief of God's works (observable by us) we may reasonably suppose that his glory doth chiefly shine; and will therefore be most discernible to us, if we open our eyes and apply our minds thereto.

II. Thus doth humane nature, being in each singular man, shew the existence of God, as its original author and pattern; considering also men as related and combined together in society, some glimpse of a divine power and wisdom ordering them toward it, and preserving them in it, may be perceived. As in the world natural, the parts thereof are so fitted in varieties of size, of quality, of aptitude to motion, that all may stick together (excluding chasms and vacuities) and all co-operate incessantly to the preservation of that common union and harmony which was there intended: So in the world political we may observe various propensions and aptitudes disposing men to collection and coherence and co-operation in society. They are apt to flock together, not only from a kind of necessity, discovered by reason, for mutual help and defence; but from a natural love to company and conversation, with an aptness to delight therein; and from an inbred aversion to that solitude, wherein many great appetites natural to man must needs be stifled. They are also marvellously fitted to maintain intercourse not only by the principal guide thereof, reason, but by that great instrument of it, speech, whereby men impart and as it were transfuse into one another their inmost thoughts; which faculty doth evidently relate unto, and plainly shews men naturally designed for society. In order thereto men are also indued with several subordinate inclinations and qualifications (arising from different temper of body, or disposition of mind) requisite to cement society, and preserve it for a competent durance in peace and order; so few being made very sagacious and provident, and thence fit to direct others, very quick and active, thence able to execute; others of a high spirit and courage, thence affecting and disposed to command; most others being dull in conceit, or heavy of temper; or of a soft spirit, and thence apt to follow, content to rest in mean state, willing to obey. All these things being so ordered, that even contrarieties of humour in men do serve to settle them in their due place and posture; to beget and preserve a peaceful union, and a decent harmony of action in society; which, supposing all men in ability and inclination more like or equal (able to do, apt to effect the same things) could hardly be; for then all men would be competitors and strugglers for the same thing, and so none would easily obtain, or peacefully enjoy it.

Now since it is plainly best for man to live thus in society, many great benefits thence accruing to him, (security to his life, safe enjoying the fruits of his

his industry, much ease by mutual assistance, much delight in conversation; all that civil people enjoy of convenience beyond Barbarians and Savages, or indeed above beasts) that men are so disposed and fited thereto, is an argument of mighty wisdom and great goodness in that cause, from whence all this proceeded; and such a cause is God.

Thus from the constitution of societies we may collect a provident care over humane affairs; the same also may be reasonably deduced from the preservation of them; for although man be inclined unto and fitted for society, yet being an agent very free and loose in his action (acting contingently, and without necessary subjection to any settled law or rule, as do other things in nature) no ordinary banks will constantly retain him in due place and order; so that the course of affairs, perverted by some mens irregular wills and passions, would run into great confusion, did not a wise care also continually govern things, seasonably interposing its hand, and thereby upholding, retaining, establishing them in order, or reducing them thereinto, did not a superintendent power restrain the fierceness of tyrants, the ambition of grandees, the greediness of oppressors, the wildness and precipitancy of factious multitudes; did not God sometime *break the arm of the wicked*; or (as Job speaks) *pour contempt upon princes, and weaken the strength of the mighty*; If he, that *stilleth the noise of the seas*, did not also *repress the tumults of the people*. Indeed as in nature it is wisely provided that tigers, wolves and foxes upon the earth, that kites in the air, and sharks in the sea, shall not so multiply and abound, but that many tame and gentle creatures shall abide there by them: So among men, that (among divers fierce, ravenous, crafty and mischievous men) so many poor, simple and harmless people do make a shift to live here in competent safety, liberty, ease and comfort, doth argue his special overwatching care and governance, who (as we are, in conformity to experience, taught by sacred scripture) hath an especial regard unto the poor, and unto the meek; providing for them, and protecting them.

Psal. 37. 17.
Psal. 10. 15.
Job 12. 21.
38. 15.
Psal. 107. 40.
Psal. 75. 7.

Psal. 146. 7.
107. 41.
9. 9. 10. 14.
37. 18.

I might subjoin those significations of providence, which the general connexion of mankind doth afford; things being so ordered, that several Nations and Societies shall be prompted by need or by advantage mutual to maintain correspondence and commerce with each other; under common laws and compacts, that so there should become a kind of union and harmony even among the several parts and elements, as it were, of the humane world. I might consider the benefit that arises (as in the natural world from contrary qualities and motions, so) in the humane world even from wars and contentions; how these rowze men from sloth, brush away divers vices, ferment and purge things into a better condition; but I will not strive to be so minute and subtle.

Here I shall conclude these sorts of argumentation, inferring the existence of God from the common effects obvious to our sense and experience, either in the greater world of Nature, or lesser world of Man; by which God doth continually in a still, though very audible voice, whisper this great truth into our ears. There be other sort of effects, more rare and extraordinary, which go above or against both those streams of natural and humane things, whereby God doth more loudly, as it were, and expressly proclaim his Being and Providence; the consideration of which I shall reserve to another time.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words, which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I

I Believe in God.

SERMON VIII.

THE BEING of GOD

Proved from

Universal Consent.

PSALM 19. 3, 4.

*There is no speech, nor language, where their voice is not heard: their line (or rather according to the * LXX, their voice) is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.* ^{* who read Dnp instead of Dp.}

THE Psalmist doth in this place observe and affirm (very plainly) the Universality of Religion; that all Nations did conspire in acknowledging a Divinity, and ascribing thereto the framing and conservation of the heavens. He supposes the heavens to speak an universal Language, heard and understood by all people, therein glorifying God and declaring him their Maker.

Upon which supposition I purpose now to ground an argument to prove (that which formerly by several other kinds of discourse I have endeavoured to evince) that great fundamental truth concerning the existence of God, that is, of one incomprehensibly Excellent Being, the Maker and Governour of all things.

The argument (to be short) is that (as Lactantius speaks) ** universal * Testimonium* and unanimous testimony of people, and nations; through all courses of time, who (otherwise differing in language, custom and conceit) only have agreed in this one matter of Opinion. This testimony, in it self simply taken, hath indeed (according to the rules of reason and judgments of wise men) no small force; but seems to have much greater, if we consider the source, whatever that could be, whence it was derived. As to the thing absolutely taken; Aristotle thus ranks the degrees of probability: What seems true to some wise men is somewhat probable; what seems to the most or to all wise men is very probable; what most men, both wise and unwise, assent unto,

unto, doth still more resemble truth; but what men generally consent in hath the highest probability, and approaches near to demonstrable truth; so near, that it may pass for ridiculous arrogance and self-conceitdness, or for intolerable obstinacy and perverseness to deny it. *A man* (saith the Philosopher) *may assume what seems true to the wise, if it do not contradict the common opinion of men*; no man's wisdom (he supposes) sufficient to balance the general authority of men: Indeed, when extravagant wits, and pretenders to wisdom (or to an extraordinary reach in knowledge) shall assert things evidently repugnant to sense or reason; that snow and coal have the like appearance (as did *Anaxagoras*,) that all motion is impossible (as *Zeno*,) that contradictory propositions may be consistent (as *Heraclitus*;) we may add to those instances, that all things in nature proceeded from Chance (as *Epicurus* and his followers;) what other means have we (since no principles can be more evident than such propositions as they reject) to confute them, or to decide the cause, than making appeal to the common sentiments of Mankind? which if they decline, what have we more to do than to laugh at, or pity them? however surely, he needs to have a very strong and very clear reason to shew, who dares to withstand the common suffrage of mankind, and to challenge all the world of mistake. Now somewhat to enforce this discourse; but more to evidence the matter of fact upon which it is grounded, and withal to make good that confirmation thereof, which was intimated; I shall alledge some few testimonies of ancient Philosophers (that is of witnesses in this cause most impartial and unsuspect-

Θείν δ' αὖ τις
τὸ δὸν τῶν τοῖς
σοφοῖς, ἐὰν μὴ
ἐναντίον ταῖς
ἐπὶ πολλῶν
δόξαις ᾖ.
Top. I. 8.

Multum dare solemus presumptioni omnium hominum, apud nos veritatis argumentum est aliquid omnibus videri; tanquam deos esse sic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio insita est; nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moreq; profecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat. Sen. Epist. 117. vid. de Benef. 4. 4.

Firmissimum hoc afferri videtur cur Deos esse credamus, quod nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cuius mentem non imbuat Deorum opinio. Multi de Diis prava sentiunt (id enim vitioso more effici solet) omnes tamen esse vim, & naturam divinam arbitrantur. — Omni autem in re consensus omnium gentium lex natura putanda est. Tusc. 1. p. 299.

Vid. de Nat. D. 1. pag. 22. & 2. pag. 53, 57, &c.

Ἐν τοσούτῳ πολέμῳ καὶ εἰς τὴν δια-
φωνίαν ἡμεῖς αὖ ἐν πάσῃ γὰρ ἀπόφα-
σιν νομίζοντες καὶ λόγον, ὅτι διὰ τὴν πάντων
βασιλευσὶ καὶ πατὴρ καὶ θεοὶ πολλοὶ, οὐδὲ
πᾶσι δὲ, συνδεχόμενοι δὲ, πάντα τὰ ἴδιον
ἄλλω λέγουσιν, καὶ ὁ βαρβαρὸς λέγει, καὶ
ὁ ἡγερέτης, καὶ ὁ δαδάρης, καὶ ὁ σαρδῆς,
καὶ ὁ ἀσσοῦ. Diff. 1. p. 5.

Ἐν τῷ ἐξελύοντο ἐν τῷ εὐμπαρ-
ταίῳ δὸν καὶ τῶν ἀδίων καὶ τα-
πεινῶν καὶ ἀδυνάτων. καὶ ἀδυνάτων
λέγει, καὶ εἰς ἀμφοτέρους, καὶ εἰς ἀμφο-
τέρους. Id. 16. Καὶ τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις
τῶν καὶ βαρβαρῶν νομίζοντες, οὐκ ἔστι μὴδὲ
ἀνθρώπων εἰς ἀδελφότητα ἐξελύοντες, μὴδὲ
ἀμφοτέρωθεν πρὸς δαδὴν, ἀλλὰ γὰρ εἰς
ἑαυτοὺς, καὶ ἀλλήλους καὶ ἡμῶν ἀλλήλους,
καὶ, &c. Allan. var. 2. 31.

ed) selected out of innumerable others extant and obvious, serving to the same purpose: *We are wont to attribute much* (saith *Seneca*) *to what all men presume*; 'tis an argument with us of truth, that any thing seems true to all; as that there be Gods we hence collect, for that all men have engrafted in them an opinion concerning Gods; neither is there any Nation so void of laws, or good manners, that it doth not believe there are some Gods; so doth he assert the matter of fact, and argue from it: the like doth *Cicero* in many places, sometimes in the person of his Dialogists, sometimes according to his own sense; pressing this argument as very weighty. *This* (saith he, in his *Tusculane questions*) *seems a most firm thing, which is alledged, why we should believe Gods to be, because no Nation is so fierce, no man so wild, whose mind an opinion concerning Gods, hath not imbued: Many think amiss concerning Gods, for that uses to proceed from bad custom, but all do however conceive a divine power and nature to exist* — Now in all things the consent of all nations is to be supposed a law of nature. We shall have other occasion to cite divers places out of *Plato* and *Aristotle*, confirming the same thing; I shall now only add these pregnant words of *Maximus Tyrius*: *In such a quarrelling, and tumult, and jangling* (about other matters of opinion) *you may see this one by common accord acknowledged law and speech, that there is one God, the King and Father of all; and many Gods, the children of God, and ruling together with him; this the Greek says, and this the Barbarian says; the inhabiters of the Continent, and the Islander, the wise, and the unwise do say the same.*

Thus it appears, by testimony abundantly sufficient (to which also all Histories ancient and modern do agree) that our conclusion hath been the Catholick and current doctrine of all times and of all places; so that who denies assent thereto, is beyond measure paradoxical, and belongs to a Sect very thin and weak; is in opinion what a monster is in nature, a thing extraordinary and uncouth, as a Lion without courage, an Ox without Horns, a Bird without wings (as the Philosopher speaks) a thing which seldom

seldom happens to be, and that never without some great error, or defect.

But if, as surely he will, our haughty adversary, shall refuse the verdict of this grand jury, we may assert its authority, not only as competent in itself, but as more considerable in respect to the causes, whence it proceeded; or from the manner by which this general consent can be conceived to have been produced and propagated among men. That men should thus conspire in opinion must needs proceed either 1. from hence, that such an opinion was by way of natural light or instinct (as the first most evident principles of science are conceived to be, or as the most effectual propensities toward good are) implanted in Man's nature; thus Cicero and other Philosophers suppose it to have come: In him it is thus said; and argued: *Since not by any institution, or custom, or law, this opinion is established, and among all, without exception, a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; we having implanted, or rather inbred notions concerning them; but about whatever men naturally do agree, that must needs be true; we must therefore confess there are Gods.* Thus doth he draw this opinion from original light of nature. Or, 2. it may come from a common inclination in man's soul naturally disposing every man to entertain this opinion, whenever it is propounded, as there is in our eyes a natural readiness to perceive the light, whenever it shines before us; thus others explain the rise thereof, as Julian particularly: *We all, faith he, without being taught (without any painful or long instruction) are persuaded, that a Divinity exists; and to regard it, and to have, we may suppose, a speedy tendency (or recourse) thereto; being in such manner disposed thereto in our souls, as things endowed with the faculty of seeing are to the light:*

the same similitude is, as I remember, used by Plato to the same purpose. Or, 3. it may come hence, that some very prevalent reason (obvious to all men, even to the most rude and barbarous, and flowing from common principles or notions of truth) did beget this agreement in them: Thus Plutarch de-Plut. de plac. 1. 6. rives it from mens common observation of the Stars constant order and motion; So St. Paul also seems to imply, the knowledge of God manifest to all men from the creation of the world, and the works of God visible therein; and here (in this 19th Psalm) the Prophet may seem to intend the same, although it be not certain he does; for that general acknowledgment and glorifying of God as maker of the heavens, which he avouches, may be understood as well the consequence as the cause of this religious opinion. Or, 4. it might from some common fountain of instruction (from one ancient Master, or one primitive tradition) be conveyed, as from one common head or source into many particular conduits. Thus the Author of the Book de Mundo (dedicated to Alexander) seems to deduce it: *It is an ancient saying, says he, and running in the race of all men, that from God all things, and by God all things were constituted, and do consist.* The like Aristotle himself im-

plies in a notable place, which we shall afterward have occasion to produce.

No other way beside one of these can we (following experience or reason) imagine by which any opinion or practice should prevail generally among men, who otherwise are so apt to differ and dissent in judgment about things. And be it any one or more of these ways that this opinion became so universally instilled into mens minds, our argument will thereby gain weight and force: If we assign or acknowledge any of the two first ways, we do in effect yield the question; and grant it unreasonable to deny our conclusion: if nature forcibly drives men, or strongly draws men into this persuasion (nature, which always we find in her notions and in her instincts very sincere and faithful, not only to our selves, but to all other creatures) how vain an extravagancy will it then be to oppose it? Also, if we grant that plain reason, apparent to the generality of men, hath moved them to consent herein, do we not therefore by dissenting from it, re-

Cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio constituta, manifestum ad unum omnium firma consensio, intelligi necesse est esse Deos, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus; de quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est. *Esse igitur Deos confitendum est.* De N. D. 1. pag. 22. vid. 2. de N. D. 53, 57. &c.

Πάντες ἀδιδάκτους ἢ θεῶν τι πεποισμεθα, καὶ περὶ τοῦ ἀπορροῦν, ἐπ' αὐτὸ τε, οἶμαι, σπένδον ὥστε διατιθέμενοι τὰς ψυχὰς περὶ αὐτὸ, ὥστε οἶμαι περὶ τὸ φῶς τὰ βέλτεστα. Jul. ad Heraclitum.

Ἀρχαῖον μὲν ἐν τῇ λόγῳ, καὶ παλαιῶν ἐν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὅς ἐστι θεὸς τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ θεῶν ἡμῖν συνέστηκεν. Cap. 6.

Metaph. 12. 23

nounce common sense, and confess our selves unreasonable. But if we say, that it did arise in the last manner, from a common instruction or primitive tradition (as indeed to my seeming from that chiefly, assisted by good reason, it most probably did arise) we shall thereby be driven to inquire, who that common Master, or the Authour of such tradition was? Of any such we find no name recorded (as we do of them, who have by plausible reasons or artifices drawn whole Nations and Sects of people to a belief of their doctrine) we find no time when, no place where, no manner how it began to grow or spread, as in other cases hath been wont to appear; what then can we otherwise reasonably deem, than that the first deliverers and teachers thereof were none other, than the first parents of mankind it self, who as they could not be ignorant of their own original, so could not but take care by ordinary education to convey the knowledge thereof to their Children; whence it must needs insensibly spread it self over all posterities of men, being sucked in with their milk, being taught them together with their first rudiments of speech? Thus doth that consideration lead us to another, very advantageous to our purpose; that mankind hath proceeded from one common stock of one man or a few men gathered together; which doth upon a double score confirm our assertion: first, as proving the generations of men had a beginning; secondly, as affording us their most weighty authority for the doctrine we assert. For, 1. Supposing mankind had a beginning upon this earth, whence could it proceed but from such a being as we assert? who, but such an one (so wise, powerful and good) could or would form these bodies of ours so full of wonderful artifice? who should infuse those

divine endowments, (not only of life and sense, but) of understanding and reason? Aristotle discoursing about the generation of Animals, says, *If man (or any other perfect animal) were γεννητός, he must be necessarily produced, either as out of a Worm, or as from an Egg; but is it not ridiculous to suppose him to arise in either of those manners?* did we, did ever any one in any age observe any

such production of a man? yet, why if once it could be, should it not happen sometime, yea often again, in some part of the earth, in so many thousand years? what peculiar lucky temper of slime can we imagine to have been then, which not at sometime afterward, not somewhere should appear again? Experience sufficiently declares, that more is required to so noble a production, that men no otherwise come into the world, than either from another man (fitted in a manner curious above our conception with many organs most exquisitely suited to that purpose) or immediately from a cause incomprehensibly great and wise. And could we without fondness, conceive man's body possibly might arise (like Mice, as *Diodorus Siculus* tells us, out of the mudd of *Nilus*) from earth and water fermented together, and organized by the Sun's heat; yet, (as more largely we have discoursed at another time) we cannot however well suppose his soul, that principle of operations so excellent (so much different from, so far elevated above all material motions) to spring up from dirty stuff however baked, or boiled by heat. I ask also, (supposing still this notion derived from the first men) 2. who instilled even this notion into them? why they should conceive themselves to come from God, if they did not find it so; if he that made them, did not sensibly discover himself to them, and shew them, that to him they owed their being? In short, if they did testify and teach their posterity, that they came from God, we can have no reason to disbelieve them; nor can imagine more credible witnesses, or more reasonable instructors than themselves con-

cerning their own original: 'tis a discourse (this) which we find even in *Plato*: *We must (saith he) yield credence to them, who first avouched themselves the off-spring of God, and did sure clearly know their own progenitors; It is indeed impossible to distrust the children of the Gods, although otherwise speaking without plausible, or necessary demonstrations; but, following Law, we must believe them, as testifying about matters peculiarly belonging to themselves.* Thus

De gener. Anim. 3. cap. ult.

Stoici putant homines in omnibus terris, & agris generatos tanquam fungos. Laët. 7. 4.

Vid. Lips. Phys. Stoic. 3. 3.

Πάντων τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὑπερθεῖν ἐκ-
γένους μὴ θεῶν εἶναι, ὡς ἔφασαν, σαφὲς
ἔστι τὸς αὐτῶν περὶ τούτου εἰδέναι· ὁ
δύνατον ἂν θεῶν παῖδιν ἀπίσταν καὶ παρ
ἀνδρ. τε ἀνέκτων καὶ ἀναγκάων ἀπο-
δείξαιον λέγουσιν, ἀλλ' οἱ δικαίᾳ σά-
σκεσιν ἀπαγγέλλουσιν, ἐπομένους τῷ νό-
μῳ πισυντίων. *Tim. p. 1052.*

Thus do these two notions, that of general tradition concerning God, and that concerning Man's origine upon earth from one stock, mutually support and defend each other. And indeed concerning the latter there be divers other arguments of the same kind, although perhaps hardly any so clear and valid, confirming it; I mean divers common opinions, stories and practices of an unaccountable rise, which cannot be well deemed to have been introduced, and so universally diffused among men otherwise than from this fountain. I think it worth the while to propound some instances thereof, of each kind.

Even this opinion or story it self, concerning Mankind, proceeding from one single or very narrow stock, was commonly received, and that from this head of tradition; as also divers other concerning the nature and state of Man. That God did form Man, and breath his soul into him (as *Aratus* says, that *we are God's offspring*, and as *Cicero* speaks, that *we have our souls drawn, and dropt from the divine nature*) might be shewn by innumerable testimonies to have been a general opinion; which although it have a very strong foundation in reason, yet it seems rather to have obtained by virtue of tradition.

That Man was formed after the image of God, and doth much resemble him, was also a general opinion, as *Aristotle* himself observes; and *Ovid* most expressly, according to what he found set down in ancient stories.

That Man's soul is immortal, and destined to a future state of life, in joy or pain respectively, according to his merits or demerits in this life; that there should accordingly pass severe scrutinies and judgments after death upon the actions of this life; that there were places provided of rest and pleasure for good men, of horror and misery for bad men departed; were opinions that did commonly possess mens minds; none of them, it seems, upon the force of any arguments, having a common influence upon mens minds (such as *Philosophers* did by speculation invent, being indeed too subtile for vulgar capacities to apprehend, and scarce able to persuade themselves) but rather from their education, continued through all times, and commencing from that head we speak of; as even such *Philosophers* themselves confess: *We must* (says *Plato*) *believe the reports of this kind* (speaking about these matters) *being so many, and so very ancient.* And, *We suppose* (saith *Cicero*) *that souls abide after death, from the consent of all Nations.* And, *I cannot*, saith he again, *assent unto those, who have lately begun to discourse, that souls do perish together with bodies, and that all things are blotted out by death; the authority of the antients doth more prevail with me.* And, *When* (saith *Seneca*) *we dispute concerning the eternity of souls, the consent of men either fearing or worshipping the Inferi* (that is, the state of things after death) *hath no slight moment with us.* Even *Celsus* himself (an *Epicurean* *Philosopher*, and great enemy of our faith) confesses, that *divine men had delivered it, that happy souls should enjoy a happy life hereafter.*

The opinion concerning Man having sometimes been in a better state (both in regard to complexion of mind, and outward accommodations of life) but that he did by his wilful miscarriages fall thence into this wretched condition of proneness to sin, and subjection to sorrow, was an ancient doctrine (if we take *Plato's* word) and concerning it *Cicero* hath these remarkable words: *From which errors and miseries of humane life we may* (saith he) *conclude, that sometime those ancient prophets, or interpreters of the Divine mind in the delivery of holy mysteries, who have said, that we are born to undergo punishments for the faults committed in a former life, may seem to have understood somewhat.* 'Tis true, these Authors assign this fall to the souls of

—qua si singula vos forte non movent, universa ceteris inter se connexa, atque conjuncta movere debent. Cic. de N. D. 2.

Id. Cl. Alex. Str. 5. p. 401. A natura divina haustos animos ex delibutione habemus. Cic. divin. 1.

Ανθρωποειδὲς θεός, &c. Metaph. 12. 8. Ὅσαπερ ὁ παλαιὸς καὶ τὰ ἀνθρώποις ἀπομνηστέον, ὅτι καὶ τὰς βίβας ἡ δὴν. Polit. 1. 1. Finis ad effigiem.

Cl. Str. 5. p. 442.

Περὶ τῶν ὁρίων καὶ ἀλλὰς φήμας ἔχειν. καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἔτι πολλὰ καὶ σφόδρα παλαιὰ ἔσονται. Plat. de leg. 2. Vid. Gorg. sub fin.

Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium. Cic. Tulc. 1. Neque enim assentior iis, qui hanc sapientiam differere caperunt cum corporibus simul animas interire, atque omnia morte deleri; plus apud me antiquitas valet, &c. Cic. Lael.

Quia de animarum aeternitate differimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timor inferos, aut colentium. Sen. Ep. 177.

Ἰσχυρὰς δὲ αἰσθητοὺς ἐνδελμῶν βίῃς ἡμεῖς ἐνδελμῶν. Celsus apud Orig. pag. 350.

Παλαιὸς τις λόγος. Phaed.

Ex quibus humana vita erroribus atque arummi sit, ut interdum veteres illi vates sua in sacris initiisque tradendis divina mentis interpretes, qui nos ob scelera suscepta in vita superiore panarum luendarum causa natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videntur, &c. Cic. fragm. pag. 79.

Primi mortali-
um, quique ex
his geniti na-
turam incor-
rupti seque-
bantur, &c.
Sen. Ep. 90.
— χείρας τῶν
μυῖα παμ-
αφελῶσα ἐσ-
κιδάσ', ἐν-
δραποῖσι δ'
ἐμύστω κή-
δεα λύγας.
Hes. 17.

In Phædr.

singular persons in a state of pre-existence; but it is plain enough, how easy it might be so to mistake and transform the story.) To the same head may be refer'd that current story concerning the Golden Age, in which men first did live so happily without care and pain; which so lively expresses Man's condition in Paradise. As also thereto may belong that relation concerning Man's being thrown into this miserable state, because of a rapine committed against God's will, and that by the means of a Woman sent down; who, with her hands opened the lid of a great vessel (fraught with mischiefs) and thence dispersed sad disasters and sorrows among men; as Hesiod expresseth it, in words very applicable to the fact of our mother Eve, and the event following it.

I do not know also whether what Plato says concerning man's being at first οὐδ' ἄνθρωπος (of both sexes) and being afterward cleaved into two, was borrowed from tradition, or devised from his own fancy; it surely well comports with the sacred History concerning Woman being taken out of Man. That there are two prime causes, or principles, one of good things, the other of bad, was the ancient doctrine among all the ancient Nations; of the Persians (who called one of them Oromasdes, the other Arimanius); of the Egyptians (who had their Osiris and Typhon) of the Chaldeans (who had their good and bad Planets) of the Greeks (who had their good and bad Dæmon, their Ζεὺς and ἔδης) we have reported by Plutarch in his tract de Iside & Osiride, by Laertius in his Proæme, and others (Aug. de Civ. D. 5. 21.) which conceits seem derived from the ancient traditions concerning God the author of all Good, and Satan the tempter to all evil, and the minister of divine vengeance (Plutarch expressly says the good principle was called God, the bad one Dæmon.) Indeed there were many other relations concerning matters of fact, or pieces of ancient story, agreeing with the sacred writings, which did among the ancient people pass commonly, although somewhat disguised by alterations incident from time and other causes; which seem best derivable from this common fountain: Such as that concerning the Sons of God, and Heroes dwelling on the earth; concerning men of old time exceeding those of following times in length of life, in stature, in strength of body, whereof in ancient Poets there is so much mention; concerning mens conspiring in rebellion against God, affecting and attempting to climb heaven; concerning mankind being overwhelmed and destroyed by an universal deluge, and that by divine justice, because of cruelty and oppression (with other enormous vices) generally reigning:

— Quæ terra patet fera regnat Erinny;
In facinus jurasse putes, dent ocyus omnes
Quas meruere pati (sic stat sententia) pœnas.

All over the earth fierce rage doth reign; you would take them to have sworn to do mischief; let them all immediately undergo the pains which they have deserved; this is my resolution: So God, in Ovid's style, declared the reason, why he decreed to bring that sore calamity upon mankind: I might add that prophecy commonly known, that this World shall finally perish by a general conflagration.

These opinions and stories chiefly concern Man; there were divers others concerning God and Religion, sprouting probably from the same root. That divine goodness was the pure motive of God's making the World, seems to have been a tradition, implied by their saying, that Love was the first, and the chief of the Gods: ἀγάπη μὲν ἦτορ διὸν μὴ δὲ αὐτὸν ἦτορ, said Parmenides; and Ἡδὴ ἔσπε, δὲ πᾶντοισι, μετακρίνει ἀδελφὰ τοῖσι, said Hesiod. That God made the world out of a Chaos, or confused heap of matter, which is so plainly expressed in Hesiod, in Ovid, and in other ancient Writers. That God did make or beget inferior insensible powers (of great understanding and ability, whom they called Gods, and the children of the sovereign God) whom God immediately did converse with, and in royal manner did govern; whom he did employ as spies and agents in providential administrations of humane affairs; who did frequently appear unto, and familiarly converse with men; who do walk up and down the earth observing mens actions; secretly assisting and comforting good

good men, restraining and crossing, and punishing the bad; whereof we have so many instances in *Homer*, in *Hesiod*, and in other ancient Writers; shewing as to those matters the general conceits of the old World.

That God's especial presence and residence was above, in heaven, *Aristotle* expressly tells us was the belief of all men: All men, saith he, have an opinion concerning Gods, and all men assign the highest place to the Gods, both Greeks and Barbarians.

Πάντες δὲ ἀνθρώποι θεὸν εἶναι ἔχουσιν ὁμολογίαν, καὶ πάντες τὸ ἀν-
τάτω πρὸς θεοῦ τόπον ἀνδιδίχασι καὶ
βέλτερον αὐτῷ ἵστανται. De Cael. 1. 3.

That God's providence did extend it self to all particularities of affairs; and that all things were ordered by him, he constantly exercising both benignity and justice suitably to the deserts and needs of men; encouraging and assisting, blessing and rewarding virtuous and pious men; relieving the distressed and helpless; controlling and chastising such as were outrageously unjust or impious. That God at seasons used to declare his mind to men (his approbation or displeasure in regard to their doings) by accidents preternatural or prodigious; did presignify future events; did impart foreknowledge of them in several ways; by dreams, by visions, by inspirations, &c. To these opinions were answerable divers common practices: Invoking divine help in need; consulting God by oracle, in case of ignorance or doubt; deprecating divine vengeance; making acknowledgments to God in hymns and praises; returning oblations for benefits received, both common and special; expiating guilt, and appeasing God's wrath by purgations and by sacrifices (a practice peculiarly unlikely to proceed from any other reason than institution) fortifying testimonies and promises by oath, or appeal to divine knowledge and justice; invoking (upon condition) God's judgments upon themselves or others what is called cursing; appointing Priests for God's service, and yielding them extraordinary respect; consecrating Temples and Altars; making vows, and dedicating gifts; celebrating Festivals; paying Tithes (that very determinate part) of the fruits of the earth, of the spoils in war, of the gains in trade, by way of acknowledgment and thankfulness to the donour and disposer of all things: In which, and the like opinions and performances (which it would be a long business particularly to insist on) mens general concurrence doth fairly argue, that their Religion did peculiarly result from one simple institution common to mankind.

That God doth know all the actions, words, and inward thoughts of men. Vid. Cl. Strom. 5.

That there will be a future judgment, and rewards suited to the practices of men in this life. Vid. Cl. Str. 5. p. 442.

To these we might adjoin divers civil customs, wherein most Nations did, from this cause probably, conspire: For instance, Their counting by Decads, or stopping at Ten in their numerical computations; which

Aristotle says, all men, both Barbarians and Greeks, did use, noting that so common an agreement could not arise from chance, but from nature; but it is much more plausible to assign its rise to tradition. Their having every where anciently the same number of letters, and the same names (or little varied) of them. Their dividing time into weeks (or systems

Πάντες ἀνθρώποι καὶ βέλτερον αὐτῷ ἵστανται καὶ πάντα διὰ τὴν δέκα κατασκευασμένοι—
καὶ δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ τὸν χρόνον αὐτοὶ ποιοῦσι
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἕτερον, καὶ οὐδὲν ἕτερον αὐτῶν
αὐτῶν αὐτὸν χρόνον, ἀλλὰ φυσικόν.
Arist. Prob. 15. 3.

of seven days) of which practice to have been general there be many plain testimonies. Their beginning the *ἡμερησία* (or account of the daily revolution of the heavens) from the night, grounded probably upon the report that night did precede day, (as *Hesiod* phraseth it) that night did beget day. Their general abhorrence of incestuous copulations; of which there is indeed some ground in nature, but none I suppose so very clear or discernible, as might serve alone to produce such

Νομίζουσιν δ' αὐτὸ ἀλθὲς τὸ καὶ ἡμέραν
ἔχοντα γενέσθαι. Hesiod. Theog.
—Dies natalis, & mensium, & an-
norum initia sic observant, ut noctem
dies subsequatur. Cael. de Gal. 1. 6.

a consent; yea perhaps, if one consider it, the whole business concerning matrimony will seem drawn from the head we discourse of. Their great care of Funerals, and decently interring the dead; which *Cicero* indeed deduces as a consequence upon their belief of the Soul's immortality. In fine, The Consent of the Old World in all moral notions of moment doth (to my sense) much imply the same thing; which notions although natural reason well used might suggest to all men; yet men (it seems) were never so generally disposed to reason well, as thereby alone to discern and approve unanimously the same truths;

things if we separate that only which was first delivered, that they deemed the Gods the first Beings, we may suppose what they said divinely spoken. And 'tis according to probability, all art and philosophy being, as might possibly, often invented and lost again, that even these opinions of them have as reliques been preserved until now: the opinion then of our Fathers, and that which came from the first men, is only thus far manifested to us.

Thus did the Philosopher, with a sagacity worthy so great a man, discern, that through that coarser ore, consisting in great part of dross and feculency (taken from the fondness, or fraud of human invention, or from diabolical suggestion) a pure vein of truth did run, drawn from the source of Primitive tradition; from which being supposed, we do infer, what he acknowledges divinely said, that there doth exist one first Being or substance, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfection. The like observations and judgments might be produced out of divers other Wise men (Plato, Cicero, and the like) who acknowledge and urge this common tradition as a good argument of the truths we maintain, as to the substance of them; yet scruple not to dissent from and to reprehend the vulgar errors and bad customs, which had crept in and became annexed to them. But let thus much suffice for this whole argument; being the last of those I intend to use for the proof of that fundamental Point, which is the root of all religion and piety.

I have produced several arguments to that purpose (or rather several kinds of arguments, each containing many subordinate ones) most proper (I conceive) and apt to have a general efficacy upon mens minds, in begetting and confirming a belief thereof. Each of them have indeed, to my seeming, even singly taken a force irresistible; and the greatest in its kind, that any such conclusion, not immediately apparent to sense, is capable of. The existence of any one cause in natural Philosophy, is not there demonstrable by effects in any proportion so many or various, so conspicuous or certain. No question can be determined by an authority so ample and comprehensive, so express and peremptory. No doctrine can to its confirmation alledge so general, so constant, so uniform a tradition. No matter of fact can be assured by testimonies so many in number, so various in kind, so weighty in quality, as those, upon which this conclusion doth stand. And if we join together all these, in themselves so considerable and powerful forces, how can we be able to resist them? how can we dare to doubt of that, which they conspire to infer? When, I say, to the universal harmony of Nature the common voice of Nations doth yield its consent; when with the ordinary course of things, so many extraordinary accidents do concur in vote; when that which many reasons prove, continual tradition also teaches; what can the result be, but firm persuasion in every wise and honest heart of the proposition so confirmed? Except we can suppose, that, by a fatal conspiracy, all the appearances in nature, and all the generations of men; the highest reason and the greatest authority imaginable have combined to deceive us.

In the precedent Discourses I have endeavoured to prove the Existence of God, by arguments, which do indeed more immediately evince those three principal attributes, Wisdom, Power and Goodness incomprehensible, but which also consequentially declare all other the attributes commonly esteemed ingredients of that notion, which answers to the name of God; (absolutely put, and without any adjunct limiting and diminishing it;) all those attributes which Aristotle's definition, *The eternal most excellent living thing*; or that of Tertullian, *the supreme great thing*; do include or imply; namely, his *Unity* first; then his *Eternity* and *Indefectibility*; his immense *Omnipresence*, his *Spirituality*, his *Justice* and *Veracity*; his *Sovereign Majesty* and authority; with the like connected to those

αὐτὸς πᾶσι θεοῖς ἐννοούμενος ὡς τὸ δύνα-
τον ἰσχυρὸν καὶ τίχον, καὶ φιλοσοφίας,
καὶ πάλιν ἐπαρρησιάζοντα τὰς τὰς
δόξας ἑαυτῶν, οἷον ἀνθρώπων θεοῖς
οὐδὲ μύχεται τὸν ἡ πόρ' ἐν πᾶσι
δοξῇ, καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ
οὐτῶν ἡμῶν παρὰ μόνον. Arist. Me-
taphys. 12. 8.

Θαυμάζειν ὅτι τὸν θεόν ὅς ἐστιν ἀίδιον
θεῶν. Arist. Metaph. 12. 7.
Summum magnum, & forma, &
ratione, & vi, & potestate. Tert.
adv. Marc. 1. 3.
Ἡ μακροχρόνιος καὶ ἀφθαρτὸς ἀ-
θάνατος τὸ ἀγαπῶν πᾶσι τοῖς
λογισμοῖς μετακινῶν τὸ πολυπόδιστον
κάλαν' ἡ ἀρετὴ καὶ ὅτι ἐστὶν ἡ πηγὴ
τῆς ζωῆς τὸ νοεῖν καὶ ἡ ἀπερίσπλη-
τος. Bas. hexaem. λογ. 4.

(for

(for I cannot prosecute all the divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of distinction, which our manner of conceit and expression is wont to assign.)

The uniformity, concord, and perfect harmony, which appears in the constitution and conservation of things, their conspiring to one end, their continuing in the same order and course, do plainly declare the *Unity* of God; even as the lasting peace of a Commonwealth (composed of persons different in affections and humour) argues one law, that regulates and contains them; as the orderly march of an Army shews it managed by one conduct; as the uniformity of a House, or of a Town declares it contrived by one Architect.

And hereto also the common suffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for, however that they worshipped a multitude of inferiour Deities, yet that there was one Supreme God, Authour and Governour of the rest, and of all things beside; transcending in power and wisdom, and all kind of perfection, was evidently the common opinion; whom therefore we see

Ἦτος, μέγιστος, μεγίστος.

Major popularitas generis humani etiam tanta idololatriâ dominationem obumbrante, seorsum tamen illi quasi proprio nomine Deum perhibent; Et Deum Deorum; Et si Deus dederit; Et quod Deo placet; Et Deo commendo. Tertull. adv. Marc. i. 10.

In Tim.

Cic. i. de N.D.
Arist. de
Mund. cap. 7.

Quoties vobis, sibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellat: tot appellationes ejus esse possunt, quos munera; hunc Et Liberum patrem, Et Herculeum, ac Mercurium nostri putant; sic hunc naturam voca, factum, fortunam; Omnia ejusdem Dei sunt variè utentis sua potestate. Sen. de Benef. 4. 7.

See that most remarkable Saying of Sophocles (apud Grot. in Excerpt. p. 149.) Ἦτος ταῖς ἀνδραγαθίαις, Ἦτος δὲν δαίμων, &c. Marf. Fic. in arg. lib. 10. de Leg.

the Poets (the best interpreters of the popular opinions) do style the *Father of Gods and Men; the King of the Gods; the most High, most great, most excellent, &c.* The greater popularity (as Tertullian speaks) of mankind, even when Idolatry obscured the sense of divine providence, did however appropriate the Name of God especially to one; in their usual expressions; being wont to say, if God grant; and what pleases God, and I commend it to God. And if the Vulgar had in some measure this conceit, the wiser sort appear to have had more clear and full apprehensions and persuasions concerning it. Plato refers the making of the World to one whom he calls *πᾶντος καὶ ποιητὴν* (the Father and Maker of the Universe.) Aristotle, when he hath occasion to speak of God, doth usually speak in the singular; so do other Philosophers, as the Stoicks, in their famous precept, *Deum sequi* (to follow God, that is, to acquiesce in, or submit to divine providence) sometime they do expressly signify this to be their opinion: *There are many popular Gods, said Antisthenes, but one Natural one; Ἦς ὁ ἀνθρώπων καὶ Ἦς. Being really One* (saith the Authour de Mundo) *he hath many names, according to the several affections he discovers, and the operations he exerts; with whom Seneca thus agrees: So often as you please, you may diversly name the Authour of things: there may be so many appellations of him, as there be gifts or offices and operations; him our people fancy to be Father Bacchus, and Hercules, and Mercury; call him also Nature, Fate, Fortune; all these are but names of the same God, variously using his power: if they ever speak of Gods plurally, they are to be understood to speak with the like opinion of them, as we of Angels, that is, of invisible, intelligent powers, created by the supreme God, dependent of him, subject to him; Marf. Ficinus his caution concerning Plato being applicable to the rest: sed ne turbet quæso Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot possunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.* So much for God's Unity.

As to his Eternity; If God made all things, he could not receive being from another; and, He who made this World, what reason can there be to suppose him to be from another? Nor can any thing receive a being from it self, or from mere nothing spring up into being; therefore the Maker of the World must be Eternal. Something of necessity must be eternal, otherwise nothing could have been at all; other things shew themselves to have proceeded from the wisdom, power and goodness of One; whence that One is Eternal; and so all Nations have consented that God is.

That

That he is immortal and immutable doth also follow plainly: for he not depending for his being, or any thing thereto belonging, upon any other thing, neither can he depend for his continuance or conservation; having power superior to all things, as having conferred on them whatever of power they have, nothing can oppose him, or make any prevalent impression upon him, so as to destroy or alter any thing in him.

Also, from his making, his upholding, his governing all things is consequent, that he was ever and is every where: where his power is, there his hand is: for every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient; nothing can act upon what is distant. That with his presence and power he doth penetrate all things, operating insensibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the spirituality of his being; and that he doth not consist of such matter (so extended, so divisible) as those things do, which we by sense perceive.

His over-reaching wisdom implies him incapable of being deceived; and his over-bearing power signifies that he doth not need to deceive; and his transcendent goodness proves him unwilling to deceive; the like we may say of doing wrong; whence are consequent his perfect veracity and justice.

Lastly, The Excellency of his nature, the Eminency of his wisdom and power; the Abundance of his goodness; as also, his having given being, then preserving it to all things; do infer his rightful title to supreme dominion; and accordingly, that all love, all obedience, all praise and veneration are due to him; according to the devout acknowledgment of those blessed Elders: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and honour and power, (or authority) because thou hast made all things; and for thy will they are and were created.* Apoc. 4. 11.

I Believe in God.

SERMON IX.

THE BEING of GOD

Proved from Supernatural Effects.

JOHN 5. 17.

But Jesus answered them: my Father hitherto worketh, and I work.

WHEN-at first by the divine power this visible Systeme of things was consummated and settled in that course wherein it now stands, it is said that God rested from all his work which he had made; the plain meaning of which saying is, that God had so framed all the parts of nature, and several kinds of things, and disposed them into such an order, and inserted into them such principles of action, that thereafter (without more than an ordinary conservation or concurrence from him) things generally should continue in their being, station and course, without any great change for ever; that is for so long as God had determined, or till their due period was run through: (He established them, as the Psalmist speaks, for ever and ever; he made a decree, that

Ἐστὶν δ' ἐν καταπαύσει τὸ τῶν
ἡμῶν ὅτι γεννηθῶν εἰς πάντα χρόνον
ἀσφαλτῶς φυλάσσεται τιταχεται, καὶ
ἡ παλαιὰ ἀταξία ἵκανον ὅτι κτισ-
μάτων καταπαύσονται. Clem. Alex.
St. 6. (pag. 493.)

Psalm 148. 6. *shall not pass: His word was settled in the heavens, and his faithfulness unto all generations; they continue this day according to his ordinances: He made a covenant with day and night, and appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth.*
Jer. 33. 25. *Thus God rested and ceased from his work of Creation. But it is not said, nor intended, that God did absolutely give over or forbear working; that he with-drew his care, and tied up (as it were) his own hands by a resolution not to intermeddle more with any thing, but to enjoy a kind of Epicurean ease and ἀπεργα.* No: his wisdom hath so ordered things, that there should be need and reason of his acting continually; that there should be frequent occasion of variously displaying his glorious attributes; of exercising his power, of demonstrating his goodness. Indeed as to Beings merely natural

Ἀγαθὸς δ' ὁ
ὁ παύσεται
πότε ἀγαθὸς
ἐργῶν, καὶ ὅτι
δεδοται
παύσεται.
Clem. Alex.
ibid.

tural and unintelligent there were no need of his doing more; for they are all thoroughly his obedient servants, and exactly fulfil his word; never stragling from the station in which he placed them; never transgressing the rule that he prescribed them: but he hath also made other Beings, by nature incapable of such uniformity and settlement; very free, and therefore very mutable; to the well governing of whom therefore a continual intention and activity is requisite. For the use and Benefit of which Beings as a great part of nature was designed and made by God, so it was not unmeet, that for their sake he should sometime alter the course of nature, and cross or check the stream of things. The fuller and clearer illustration of his glory, the shewing that all things do not pass on in a fatal track; the confirming that he made Nature, because he can command and control it; the demonstration of his especial care over and love toward men, in suspending or thwarting his own established laws and decrees (as it were) for their sake; the exciting men the more to mind God, and impressing on them a respect toward him; the begetting faith in him, and hope in his providence, are fair accounts, for which God sometimes should perform (even in a manner notorious and remarkable to us) actions extraordinary. And that God doth so, we learn in the words I read from the mouth of truth it self; whose affirmation (for persuading the incredulous) I intend to second with particular instances, attested to by reasonable proof; suitable to the nature of the matter; and this with design to infer from such operations (as effects assignable to no other cause) the Existence of God; having endeavoured formerly to deduce the same from the common ordinary works, appearing in both worlds, natural and humane. And as we before distinguished the ordinary works or actions, so here we shall distinguish the extraordinary ones, into two sorts; into those which are above or against the course (or power) of nature; and those, which surmount or cross the stream of humane affairs; such, as being evidenced and granted to have been really performed, either all men will believe, or the wisest men will readily confess the being of such a Cause as we assert.

Psal. 119. 91.
Psal. 148. 8.
Isa. 40. 26.
Psal. 104. 9.
19.

John 9. 3.
Exod. 7. 5.
Deut. 4. 35.
Dan. 4. 35.

I. Let us first consider the first kind: And of these we may generally affirm, that no man can deny many such to have been performed, without giving the lye to the most authentick records of history that are or have been extant; without extremely disparaging the credit of mankind, without impeaching all Nations and all Ages not only of extreme weakness (in credulous assent unto, regarding and relying upon such appearances; which not only the vulgar sort, but even Princes and Statesmen, learned men and Philosophers every-where have done) but of notorious baseness and dishonesty, in devising and reporting them; without indeed derogating utterly from all testimony that can be rendred to any matter of fact, and rendring it wholly insignificant; for that if we may disbelieve these reports, there is no reason we should believe any thing that is told us.

Nostrum quidem, inquit (Socrates) humanum est consilium, sed de rebus & obscuris & incertis ad Apollinem consilio referendum, ad quem etiam Athenienses publice de majoribus rebus semper retulerant, &c. Cic. de divin. p. 206.

To this kind we may refer the presignification and prediction of future events, especially those which are contingent, and depend upon man's free choice; to the doing of which nothing is more evident in it self, nor more acknowledged by all, than that a power or wisdom supernatural is required; concerning which we have the (not-despicable) consent of all times, continued down from the remotest antiquity, that frequently they have been made: There is, saith Cicero, an ancient opinion, drawn even from the heroical times (that is from the utmost bounds of time spoken of) that there is among men a certain divination, which the Greeks call prophecy (or inspiration) that is a presension, and knowledge of future things. And of this kind even prophane story doth afford many instances; there indeed having scarce happened any considerable revolution in state, or action in war, whereof we do not find mention-

Vetus opinio est jam usque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, videtur & populi Romani, & omnium hominum firmata consensu, versari quandam inter homines divinationem; quam Græci μαντιαν appellant, id est presensionem & scientiam rerum futurarum. De Div.

Gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem, tamque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, & à quibusdam intelligi, prædictique posse censeri. Idem.

*Ἄλλ' ὅταν ἤμιον, &c. Herod. 1.
ἢ δὲν Σάλαμιν, &c. Herod. 7.
Διευκτέ δ' ἡμὶν αὐτὴντα μέλει, &c.
Paulan. 9. pag. 563.*

Collegit innumerabilia oracula Chrysippus, nec ullum sine locupletis auctore, atque teste. De Div. 172.

** Vid. Cic. de Divin. pag. 206.
de Nat. Deor. 2. pag. 54.*

perished) an innumerable store of them, all confirmed by good authority and testimony. I cannot stand to relate many of them particularly, or discuss the validity of relations concerning such instances; I shall only say, that discourse in Tully, concerning the oracle at Delphos, which may be extended to the rest of that sort, doth not seem contemptible: I defend (saith he) *this one thing; that never would that oracle have been so renowned, nor so stuff'd with the gifts of all Nations and Kings, if every age had not experienced the truth of those oracles; for 'tis hard, that a mere imposture should, to the expence and damage of so many persons, so long continue in credit.* I will adjoin but one observation to this purpose, that even among those Pagans, who regarded these things, it was known and acknowledged, that such portending, or predicting future things, although immediately conveyed by inferiour powers, did originally proceed from the one Supreme God; so the wise Poet implies, when he makes the prophetick Fury say, that she received her prediction from Apollo, and Apollo from the Almighty Father.

Æneid. 3:

*Accipite ergo animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta,
Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando;*

Notandum A. pollinem quæ dicit à Jove cognoscere.

where Servius notes, that even Apollo (he who among their Deities was in chief esteem for rendering oracles) is said to derive his knowledge from Jove, or the Sovereign God.

It seemed not amiss to touch those instances of this kind, which profane Story yields, but the Holy Scriptures afford most evident and eminent ones; some of them extant in Books written and in use long before the events foretold: as that of Abraham's concerning his posterity sojourning, and being afflicted in Egypt four hundred years; of the Prophet concerning Josiah (some hundred years before his birth) that such a Prince should be, and what he should do; of Isaias concerning Cyrus by name, his conquests, his restoring the Jews from exile, his re-edifying Jerusalem; of Jeremiah concerning the captivity, and its duration for seventy years; of Daniel concerning the grand revolutions of Empire in the world, (wherein the achievements of Alexander, and his Successors are so plainly described, that Porphyrius could not but acknowledge the consonancy of them to the events) of our Saviour concerning the siege and destruction of Jerusalem; the truth of which reports, although we should allow those Writings which contain them, an authority no greater than humane, there were no reason to question; since most of those Writings were extant a good time before the events specified. Now if but one of these innumerable instances were true, if ever one event hath been presignified or predicted (and 'twere a hard case, that among so many not one should prove so) it sufficiently evinces what we intend.

But

But to our purpose especially do appertain the works usually styled *miraculous*, which exceed or contravene the ordinary course or power of nature; * which therefore all men will readily confess performable only by an agent * John 3.2. in power or knowledge exceeding their comprehension (such as are, for example, the fire being withheld from burning, and the waters from flowing; the sick being (without medicinal applications) cured of long chronical distempers; limbs being (in the like manner) restored to persons maimed, and senses to them who, from their birth (or otherwise for a long time) had been deprived of their use; restoring the dead to life (a thing which *Pliny* mentions as impossible in his conceit to God himself) and the like; of these, although all Nations have had so many performed among them, as sufficed to breed every where a constant opinion, that a divine power did frequently interpose, so as to control and overbear the force of nature (which opinion could not in likelihood so generally and constantly prevail without any ground at all;) Yet the Holy Scriptures do most fully and clearly testify concerning them to have been in great number performed, for the confirmation of that divine truth and will of God, which they declare him pleased to reveal; for guiding men into, or setting them in right opinions or good practices; for disabuling and withdrawing them from ways of error and vice; for the encouragement and relief of good, or the restraint, discouragement and chastisement of evil men; which in reason are the most proper causes, why by such a Being, as we suppose (so wise, so good) such works should be effected the testimonies concerning which there can be no good reason assigned of refusing, but very great to admit them, as we hope at another time satisfactorily to declare. Indeed God's patefaction of himself, his mind, his will (in many kinds and manners particularly to the Fathers of old, and afterward generally to all the world by his Son; on purpose sent from heaven to publish and accomplish his designs of mercy and favour to all mankind) accompanied with so many prodigious works of power, and so many glorious circumstances of providence conspicuous to all the world, and withal so accommodated as to beget first of all this assurance in us, that a divine power doth exist and preside over all affairs both natural and humane, is an argument which in all honest and well disposed minds (not possessed with false prejudices, nor depraved by vicious inclinations) cannot but obtain effect, the fuller urging and confirming of which I shall refer to another season, when it will serve a more general purpose, even the confirming not only this part, but even the whole of our Religion in gross: I shall only now briefly say concerning them, that considering the works themselves, they were in number so many and various, in kind so great and high; as to the manner of performance so naked and open; (being done in the face, and exposed to the senses of all men) that there could be no reason to suspect any juggling or humane artifice used about them; considering the witnesses that asserted them, they were persons who by their writings, by their behaviour, by the effect of their endeavours approved themselves very intelligent; in their intentions very honest and free from any sinister design, in their conversations very innocent and virtuous, in their attestation very consistent and constant; so that there could be desired no witnesses of any fact better qualified, or more credible than they; considering the design of those works, there could be none more noble and excellent, more worthy of God, more beneficial to man; it being chiefly the confirmation of a doctrine, incomparably the most reasonable and most useful that ever appeared among men; productive of the best fruits, apt (being entertained heartily) to make men highly good and truly happy; to promote the honour of God and the interests of goodness; to secure as much as can be both the publick and private welfare of mankind. Considering which things, we can have no good reason to distrust the performance of such works, by authentick records, by constant tradition attested to us.

I may adjoin to the former sorts of extraordinary actions, some other sorts, the consideration of which (although not so directly and immediately) may

Ne Deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest consciscere mortem, nec mortales aeternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos. Nat. Hist. 2. 7.

ἐν μὲν δ' ἔτις
πᾶν
ἀπὸ πολλοῦ
ἤντινα πολ-
λοῖ
λαοὶ φημίζου-
σι.

serve

serve our main design; those (which the general opinion of mankind hath approved, and manifold testimony hath declared frequently to happen) which concern *apparitions* from another world (as it were) of Beings unusual; concerning spirits haunting persons and places; (these discerned by all senses, and by divers kinds of effects) of which the old world (the ancient Poets and Historians) did speak so much, and of which all Ages have afforded several attestations very direct and plain, and having all advantages imaginable to beget credence. Concerning visions made unto persons of especial eminency and influence (to Priests and Prophets), concerning presignifications of future events by dreams; concerning the power of enchantments, implying the co-operation of invisible powers; concerning all sorts of intercourse and confederacy (formal or virtual) with bad spirits; all which things he that shall affirm to be mere fiction and delusion, must thereby with exceeding immodesty and rudeness charge the world with extreme both vanity and malignity; many (if not all) worthy Historians of much inconsiderateness or fraud; most Lawgivers of great silliness and rashness, most Judicatories of high stupidity or cruelty, a vast number of witnesses of the greatest malice or madness; all which have concurred to assert these matters of fact.

'Tis true, no question, but there have been many vain pretences, many false reports, many unjust accusations, and some undue decisions concerning these matters; that the vulgar sort is apt enough to be abused about them; that even intelligent and considerate men may at a distance, in regard to some of them, be imposed upon: But, as there would be no false gems obtruded, if there were no true ones found in nature; as no counterfeit coin would appear, were there no true one current; so neither can we well suppose that a confidence in some to feign, or a readiness in most to believe stories of this kind could arise, or should subsist without some real ground, or without such things having in gross somewhat of truth and reality. However, that the wiser and more refined sort of men, highest in parts and Improvements both from study and experience (indeed the flower of every Commonwealth, Statesmen, Lawgivers, Judges and Priests) upon so many occasions of great importance, after most deliberate scanning such pretences and reports, should so often suffer themselves to be deluded, to the extreme injury of particular persons concerned, to the common abusing of mankind, to the hazard of their own reputation in point of wisdom and honesty, seems no wise reasonable to conceive. In likelihood rather the whole kind of all these things, were it altogether vain and groundless, would upon so frequent and so mature discussions, have appeared to be so, and would consequently long since have been disowned, exploded, and thrust out of the world. For, as upon this occasion 'tis said in

*Opinionum
commenta dies
delet, natura
judicia confir-
mat. De Nat.
D. 2. p. 34*

Tully, Time wipes out groundless conceits, but confirms that which is founded in nature, and real.

Now if the truth and reality of these things (all, or any of them) inferring the existence of powers invisible; at least inferior ones, though much superior to us in all sort of ability, be admitted, it will at least (as removing the chief obstacles of incredulity) confer much to the belief of that supreme Divinity, which our discourse strives to maintain.

I must acknowledge that both these arguments drawn from testimonies concerning matters of fact (and indeed all other arguments) were invalid and insignificant; could any demonstration or any argument weighty enough be brought to shew the impossibility of such a thing to exist, as we infer to exist from them. But, as it is a very easy thing (so whoever is vers'd in speculation and reasoning about things cannot but find) to prove many things possible to be, which do not actually exist; so it is hard to prove the impossibility of a thing's being: Yea there is plainly no other mean of doing this, than the manifesting an evident repugnance between being it self, and some property assigned to that thing, or between several properties attributed thereto; as if we should

*'Tis not enough to say peremptorily,
'tis nonsense; or that you cannot un-
derstand how it should be; such pro-
ceedings are intolably both insolent
and vain.*

suppose a square circle or a round square to exist. But, in our case no man can shew such a repugnance; between being and wisdom, power or goodness, there is no inconsistency surely: nor can any man evince one to be between being

being and co-existing with matter, or penetrating body; between being and insensibility; between being and any other property which we ascribe to God; nor is there any clashing between those properties themselves; it is therefore impossible to shew that God cannot exist; and therefore it is unreasonable to disbelieve the testimonies (so many, so pregnant) that declare him to exist.

Men indeed, who affix themselves to things which their sense offers, may be indisposed to abstract their minds from such things, may be unapt to frame conceptions about any other sort of things; but to think there can be no other things than such as we see and feel, that nothing endued with other properties than such as these objected to our sense have, can exist, implies a great dulness of apprehension, a greater shortness of reason and judgment; 'tis much like the simplicity of a rustick, who because he never was above three miles from home, cannot imagine the world to reach ten miles farther; and will look upon all that is told him concerning things more distant, to be false, and forged to abuse him. I add, that these mens incredulity is hence more inexcusable, because the possibility of such a being its existence, the compatibility and concurrence of such properties in one thing, is (as we elsewhere have largely shewed) by a very plain instance declared, even by that Being within every man, which in a degree partakes of all those properties.

I shall leave this head of discourse, with this one remark; that they are much mistaken, who place a kind of wisdom in being very incredulous, and unwilling to assent to any testimony, how full and clear soever: For this indeed is not wisdom, but the worst kind of folly. 'Tis folly, because it causes ignorance and mistake, with all the consequents of these; and 'tis very bad, as being accompanied with dissingenuity, obstinacy, rudeness, uncharitableness, and the like bad dispositions; from which credulity it self, the other extreme sort of folly, is exempt. Compare we, I say, these two sorts of fools, the credulous fool, who yields his assent hastily upon any slight ground; and the suspicious fool, who never will be stirr'd by any the strongest reason or clearest testimony, we shall find the latter in most respects the worst of the two; that his folly ariseth from worse causes, hath worse adjuncts, produceth worse effects. Credulity may spring from an airy complexion, or from a modest opinion of one's self; suspiciousness hath its birth from an earthy temper of body, or from self-conceit in the mind: that carries with it being civil and affable, and apt to correct an error; with this a man is intractable, unwilling to hear, stiff and incorrigible in his ignorance, or mistake: that begets speed and alacrity in action; this renders a man heavy and dumpish, slow and tedious in his resolutions and in his proceedings: both include want of judgment; but this pretending to more thereof, becomes thereby more dangerous. Forward rashness, which is the same with that, may sometimes, like an acute disease, undo a man sooner; but stupid dotage, little differing from this, is (like a chronical distemper) commonly more mischievous, and always more hard to cure. In fine, were men in their other affairs, or in ordinary converse so dissident to plain testimony, as some do seem to be in these matters concerning Religion, they would soon feel great inconveniences to proceed thence; their business would stick, their conversation would be distastful; they would be much more offensive, and no less ridiculous, than the most credulous fool in the world. While men therefore so perversly distrustful affect to seem wise, they affect really to be fools, and practise according to the worst sort of folly.

Thus have I, although very cursorily, considered the first kind of works extraordinary that appear in the world; I proceed briefly to touch the other sort, observable in the transaction of humane affairs; for even in these there do happen things in a sort miraculous, or prodigious; according to reasonable estimation surpassing the common efficacy of humane causes; by which God in a language more express (as it were) and in a louder tone declares his presence and providence here; so that they must be very deaf and stupid, who do not from them learn lessons of piety and reverence toward God; who do not in them hear heaven thundring forth that proclamation to us all: *Discite justitiam moniti*. For instance,

1. We may observe, when any where things are come to such a pass, that iniquity and outrage do extremely prevail, so that the most of mens lives become intolerably grievous, that in such cases often the state of things, how seemingly stable and robust soever, in a manner sudden and strange, by means to appearance small and weak, to be overturned, and reduced to a more tolerable form; no struglings of might, no fetches of policy, no circumspection or industry of man availing to uphold it, an invisible hand checking all such force, and crossing all such devices. *A stone cut out of the mountains without hands* (that is, a slender instrument coming forth out of some remote and secret place, without any considerable influence of human endeavour) *breaking in pieces the iron, and the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold*; there being raised up instantly a *Moses* or a *Maccabeus*, an *Ehud* or a *Gideon*, a *Dion* or a *Timoleon*, by a single stroak, or a sudden impression, to deliver oppressed Nations from slavery.

Dan. 2. 45.

2. How many examples do experience and history afford us of justice and vengeance, in ways for their kind and for their circumstances very remarkable, executed in the face of the world upon persons (such as *Corah* and his fellows, *Sennacherib*, *Herod*, *Brennus*) notoriously wicked and mischievous, who have out-braved heaven by their impiety, or horribly abused mankind by their injustice?

Dan. 4. 17.

3. Yea we may take notice, that even few of those men, whose actions have been illustrious for greatness void of goodness; who have climbed to height of power and state by the ruines and slaughters of mankind, that, I say, few of such persons have departed off the stage in peace or honour. That *Alexander* was snapt in the flower of his age and glory; that *Cæsar* was no sooner arrived to the top of his fortune, than to the bottom of his life; neither having time allowed them to enjoy (scarce to taste) those fruits which they so eagerly sought and toiled for; both perhaps (one without any peradventure) being speeded away by violent and treacherous hands. Not to mention *Pompey* or *Hannibal*, or other such like men of exorbitant ambition, whose fortunes were so strangely changed, and whose ends were so dismal.

4. We may however observe, that few great Tyrants and Oppressors, few persons insolently profane or sacrilegious, have escaped the visible stroke of divine vengeance; a stroke inflicted in ways not only violent, but shameful; and that usually by means most unexpected, by the hands of their own Guards, their own Servants, their own Favourites, the very Instruments of their mischief, and these stirred up by slight causes, by some little disgrace or disgust received by them from their Master. What a long black Legend of *Caligula's*, *Nero's*, *Domitian's*, *Commodus's*, *Heliogabalus's*, *Maximinus's*, * may any man's observation, even out of profane histories, easily compose, of whom the divine justice in such ways hath rid the world?

Alexand. Pheræus ab uxore occisus. Vid. Plut. in Pelopida, ab fin.

* Of such as Sejanus, Ruffius, Eutropius, &c. Silico, &c.

Psal. 83. 17, 18.

5. I might also mention the judgments of God upon Persons and Families raised to wealth and splendour of estate by oppression, fraud, sacrilege, rapine, or such bad means; whose estates without any visible ordinary means do moulder and decay; a secret moth devouring them; a thing which falls under common observation.

6. The same providence hath more clearly discovered it self in the strange detections of murders, and other enormous mischiefs committed in darkness, and revealed by a light unaccountably darted from heaven. Of which kind not only Books, but common experience doth furnish with stories and instances very remarkable both for number and weight.

Eccl. 10. 20.
Heb. 2. 10.

Psal. 64. 3, 7.

7. The like strange discoveries of Plots contrived secretly against the publick peace, and against the lives of Princes, frequently offer themselves in story, and the like experience suggests concerning private men; *a bird of the air carrying the voice* of the wicked traitour to the ears of him who is designed against; *the stones of the wall crying out* treason and murder. Yea generally, according to the Psalmist's observation, when men have encouraged themselves in an evil matter, and have communed about laying snares privily, — saying who shall

shall see them—God doth shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly they are wounded. So that all men have reason (as he adds they will do) to fear, and to declare the work of God; if they wisely consider his doing: and himself had reason to pronounce in another place: *The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.* Psal. 9. 16.

8. I might adjoin the remarkable providences which also occur concerning the recompences and encouragements of virtue; in the protecting good men from imminent dangers, delivering them from grievous straits, supplying them in extreme needs, prospering them in their undertakings, raising them (as *Joseph, David, Daniel, &c.*) by wonderful means to wealth and dignity; for their own encouragement, or for publick benefit; concerning which occurrences the *Psalmist* had reason to say, *who is wise will observe these things; and they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.* Psal. 37. 23. I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken. Psal. 107. 43.

These considerations (with divers others of the same kind) grounded on providence, I must confess have not, singly taken, the greatest force and evidence to infer our purpose, nor can they with the same assurance and peremptoriness be urged to every adversary or disbeliever, as some other arguments may; those (which we have formerly insisted on) drawn from nature. For in nature, all causes there being themselves destitute of immediate reason or choice, and subject to no chance or contingency (properly so called) we may indeed confidently ascribe all effects, in which any reason or counsel doth appear (whether ordinary or extraordinary) to divine efficacy; there being no other cause, to which we can reasonably impute them; but in humane affairs, seeing man is an understanding and free agent, and few effects happen without some act of his inter-vening, there can hardly occur any passage (how rare and strange soever) which our incredulous Adversaries (with some kind of colour or plausible shift) will not be ready to attribute unto some reach of man's wit, or to some capricio of his humour, or to some unaccountable casualty, incident to matters of this kind (as we see the *Philistines* were apt to impute the plague of *Emorods* to chance; the *Israelites* did presently charge that terrible judgment on *Corah* and his complices upon *Moses* and *Aaron*.) And commonly divine and humane influences upon these effects (even as in nature the influences of heaven, and of inferiour particular causes) are so complicated and interwoven together, that it is not so easy to distinguish the one from the other, either in whole or in part, to separate the bounds of providence ordinary and extraordinary, to discern what God performs by usual instruments, what by his immediate hand. As also the actions of the wisest men are often grounded upon reasons remote from, and impenetrable by vulgar conceit; so are the reasons of God's proceedings with men various and often mysterious; above the reach of our capacity with distinction to apprehend them (as who for instance can oftentimes readily distinguish between God's merciful patience toward bad men, and his gracious recompencing the good; between God's just vengeance on the one sort, and his fatherly correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice either (as particular circumstances require) by adverse or prosperous events, and his trying or exercising the others virtue by the like proceedings? who can distinguish between what is performed or permitted upon general, or upon particular accounts; in respect to the publick, or in regard to private men; in relation to present times, or to posterity; upon absolute and immediate accounts, or in order to some farther, more remote designs? who I say can pretend skill enough to define what, or how much is best to be done in these cases; when it is fit to allow men to proceed in the use of their freedom, when to interrupt them? who, but he that exactly knows the limits of just and fit, the qualities and tempers of men, the state and circumstances of every thing?

I add, that God's governance of things hath no complete issue here; that this is not the only, nor the chief place of dispensing rewards and punishments; that things are but doing here, and not done; in a progress and tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a state of final resolution or perfection; where.

The Father.

SERMON X.

I believe in GOD

THE

FATHER.

EPHES: IV. 6.

One God and Father of all.

I Have formerly discoursed concerning the nature of that Belief which we here profess: I did also endeavour by several Arguments to evince the truth and credibility of the first Article of our Creed (which is indeed the foundation of all the rest, and of all Religion) *That there is one God.* I proceed to the following parts.

THE FATHER. The Appellation of God not improperly taken (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office which they bear to the supreme God) but relating to him who only, truly and properly is styled God; is sometimes put absolutely, sometime hath a relative apposition going along with it. Being absolutely or singly put, it sometimes refers by way of eminency particularly to the First Person in the blessed and glorious Trinity; as when Christ is called the *Son of God*; when God is put in distinction from the other Persons (when for instance it is said, *That they may know thee the only true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ. Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Word was with God. To serve the living and true God, and to wait for his son from heaven:* and in that form of Blessing, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all*) but commonly it is to be understood for God essentially considered (according to the Divine Essence common to all Three Persons) to whom in that respect all the Divine Attributes agree, and from whom all divine operations (*absolute & ad extra*) do jointly proceed. And to this sense or notion we have hitherto supposed that the name of God might be here applied. For, that there is one God, having such essential attributes, is the first principle and foundation of all Religion, which we must therefore suppose, if not directly expressed, yet at least sufficiently implied in the Creed.

And supposing the word doth in part imply this sense, the attribute or title of Father doth upon many accounts truly and properly belong to God (God absolute and essential) in relation to all things generally, and to some things particularly; especially, which is the most fruitful consideration, in respect to our selves.

Let us first consider the accounts upon which, then the terms (or objects) in relation to which God is so called; then let us apply the consideration to practice.

One God and Father of all.

Every attribute, every title, every relation of God doth ground an obligation, doth afford an inducement to good practice; but none other doth ground higher obligation, or yieldeth stronger inducement to all kinds of obedience, than doth this of *Father*, which here, and frequently elsewhere in Holy Scripture is ascribed to God: unto which purpose, of exciting us to good practice (to all good practice generally, and particularly to some kinds thereof) I do now intend to apply the consideration thereof; but first let us consider in what respects, or upon what grounds this title is attributed to God; then let us reflect somewhat upon the term, in respect to which God is styled *Father of all*, that is, in a larger sense of all things, in a stricter sense of all persons, in the most restrained sense of all us Christians.

The title of *Father* is upon several accounts commonly given to things; one is causality; for the efficient cause, or author of any thing, is called its father; any work is said to be the child, or off-spring, of him that maketh or inventeth it: *Hath the rain a father?* (or, who is father of the rain, as the LXX render it) or *who hath begotten the drops of the dew?* saith God in *Job*. Another ground thereof is sustenance or preservation; so *Job* saith of himself, that *he was a father to the poor and fatherless*, because he yielded them protection and relief: so *Roma patrem patriæ Ciceronem libera dixit*, Rome called *Cicero* father, because he preserved it from the attempts of wicked conspirators against its liberty and safety: education also and instruction entitle to this name; whence Saint *Paul* calleth *Timothy* and *Philemon*, the *Corinthians* and *Galatians*, whom he had instructed in the Christian Faith, his *children*: lastly governance, attended with beneficent affection and care, doth found this appellation; whence Princes are usually styled the *Fathers of their country*, being supposed to desire, and to provide for the publick good; so we have the *Fathers of tribes*, that is, the principal persons of them, who did preside over them: I do omit antiquity, and age, for which we know that persons are vulgarly called *Fathers*.

Upon all these accounts it is plain that the title of Universal Father may truly be ascribed unto God, especially in respect to our selves, who may be considered as equivalent to all other objects, as comprehending in us somewhat common to them all: God in some of these respects is the Father of all things, or of us as Beings; God is more especially the Father of intelligent Beings, and of us as such: God is the Father of all men, of all good men, and peculiarly of Christians; which respects all of them do, or should concur in us: Let us survey those particulars somewhat distinctly, then apply them as obligations and inducements to good practice.

1. God is the Father of all things, or of us as creatures; as the efficient cause and creatour of them all: *He made the world* (as St. *Paul* telleth the *Athenians*) *and all things therein*. *He commanded* (saith the *Psalmist*) *and they were created*: *The world and the fulness thereof* (that is, all wherewith it is replenished, and which it contains) *he hath founded them*. *All these things* (saith God in the Prophet) *hath mine hand made*: and *נַאֲרֹס הוּא הַיּוֹמָה הַזֶּה* *נַאֲרֹס*, the maker and father of the universe, even *Plato* styleth God. God is also the Father of all things, because he preserveth and sustaineth them by his power: *He* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *beareth up all things by the word of his power*: *He* (saith the *Psalmist*) *hath established them for ever and ever*; *he made a decree which shall not pass*, by virtue of which they subsist: also because he by a continual care doth provide for them; *they all* (saith the *Psalmist*) *wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due season*; what he

Acts 17. 24.

14. 15.

Psal. 145. 15.

146. 6. 89.

11. 33. 6.

Isa. 66. 1.

—40. 26.

Plat. in Tim.

pag. 1047.

Heb. 1. 3.

Psal. 145. 15.

Psal. 104. 27.

—145. 15.

he giveth them, they gather; he openeth his hand, they are filled with good: He also governeth, and containeth them in good order; for, his kingdom ruleth over all; and, whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doeth he in heaven and earth: all this he doeth with goodness and affection; for, his tender mercies are over all his works: whence even among Pagans the word *Pater* absolutely put did signifie the Supreme God, they understanding thereby the Author, Preserver and Governour of all things, and *Pater omnipotens* is the periphrasis, whereby the wisest Poet doth usually express God.

Isa. 40. 26.
Palm 115. 3.
103. 19. 135.
6. 147. 15.
Palm 145. 9.

Pater, & Rex Jupiter — Hor.
Serm. 2. 1.
*Pater ipse colendi Haud facilem esse
viam voluit.*
Georg.
Ζεῦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε χερίδιν, ὑπασσε
ἡγεμόνιν.

2. More especially God is the Father of intellectual Beings; he is styled *the father of spirits; particularly the Angels in way of excellency are called the sons of God: † There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord: and, When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy; in which place of Job the LXX have ἄγγελοι μου, my Angels; (although perhaps there all God's creatures may be understood rejoicing and exulting, as it were, in their being, newly by the goodness of their maker conferr'd on them:) again, Who (saith the Psalmist) in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? the sons of the mighty, it is in the Hebrew, the sons of God, and so the LXX render it; and what precedeth, who in heaven, doth make it, as it seems, best interpretable of the Angels? Of such Beings God is more especially the Father, because he did produce them in a more excellent manner; for other things he made as it were by his hand, these he breathed out of his mouth; as it is said of Adam, when God infused his soul into his body; that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; because they more nearly resemble God in their nature and properties (in spirituality, and independence upon matter; in life, and self-moving; in immortality, and perpetuity of being; in understanding, and wisdom; in will, and goodness, or in a capacity at least of such perfections) because also he ruleth them in a nobler way; a way, not of blind and constrained obedience, but of wise and free choice, according to laws of justice, by obligations of ingenuity; because he likewise beareth a more dear affection unto them, and a peculiar care over them: in respect to these Beings indeed the relation of Father is more proper, because they only can be sensible thereof, and capable to render the duties of piety, gratitude and willing obedience suitable thereto; Rational Beings (saith an Ethnick Philosopher) are the sons of God, because they only are naturally fit to converse with God, being conjoined to him by participation of Reason: And thus indeed even the Pagan Theologians commonly, from primitive general Tradition we may suppose, did conceive the Supreme God to be the Father of the gods, (intending not such gods as were of man's devising, creatures deify'd by the flattery or fondness of the vulgar, but of higher rank, answering to our Angels, whom they supposed as to approach in excellency of nature nearest to God, so to have derived their being from him, and to attend constantly upon him, partaking of his glory, and observing his pleasure) whence *Divum pater, Father of the Gods*, is a common periphrasis, or title of God among them; and particularly in the *Timæus* of Plato there is an Oration, which he representeth God making unto those creatures, presently upon their creation, beginning thus; O ye chief Gods, of whom I am the framer and father — concerning which gods that which he can say, he pretendeth to deduce from ancient original Tradition: But to come nearer to our more particular concernment;

* Heb. 12. 9.
Numb. 16. 22.
Job 1. 6.
Job 38. 7.
Palm 89. 6.
29. 1.

Ὅτι καί ποτε μόνον ταῦτα θεοὺς τοὺς
θεοὺς ὁ συνάνασεν ἐφ' ὃ καὶ λόγον ἐποίησε
πλεγμαῖα. Αἰν. Εἰσδ. 1. 9.

Psal. 103. 20.

3. God is the Father, in a more especial manner, of mankind; Have we not (saith the Prophet) one Father, hath not one God created us? and Adam is called the son of God, the genealogy of all men terminating in him; and, we are all God's offspring, saith St. Paul: we are so, for that his hands made and fashioned our bodies; and for that he formed our spirit within us, as the Prophet speaketh. He made us after his own image, so as signally to represent and resemble himself, in properties of nature, and in eminence of condition;

Mal. 2. 10;

Luke 3. 38.

Acts 17. 29.

Job 10. 8.

Palm 139.

15. 16.

Zech. 12. 1.

Palm 33. 15.

in Gen. 1. 27.

in this great Family of visible creatures he hath assigned unto us the principal station, so that other creatures there are but as servants waiting on us, we are as children, depending only on him; he hath shewed an especial tenderness of affection and good will toward us, in providing for us all manner of needful sustenance and comfortable accommodation; continually watching over us for our good, and *holding us up* (as the Psalmist speaketh) *from our mothers womb*; bestowing on us good education (instructing us by the light of nature, or dictates of natural reason and conscience, by civil conversation, by the precepts of wise men, and examples of virtuous persons, by providential encouragements of good, and deterrents from evil; together with the secret whispers, advices and motions of his grace) bearing with excessive patience our infirmities, miscarriages and offences; using seasonable and moderate chastisements to reclaim us from bad courses to those, which our duty, and our advantage do require: In short all God's dealings and demeanour toward mankind do argue in him a paternal regard thereto: whence even the blind Heathens discerned and acknowledged this general relation of God to men; and, *Gentis humana pater, atque custos* (O Father, and keeper of mankind) was an invocation suitable to their notion concerning him: from him they deduced our original; to him they ascribed the formation of our bodies, so full of wonderful artifice; from him they affirm our souls to be extracted; from his goodness and care they supposed all the conveniencies of life which we enjoy to be deriv'd; they conceived him to bear a kind affection unto man, and to have a constant care over him; as by many expresse testimonies might be shewed, and from their practices evidently may be inferred.

4. Farther yet more especially God is the Father of all good men; such a relation being yet built upon higher grounds and respects; for as good they have another original from him; virtue springeth in their hearts from a heavenly seed; that emendation and perfection of nature is produced by his grace, enlightning and quickning them: they are images of him, resembling him in judgment and disposition of mind, in will and purpose, in action and behaviour; the which resemblances do argue them to be the sons of God, and indeed do constitute them such; for, *Love your enemies* (saith our Lord) *blest those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, — that you may be the sons of your father in heaven*; and, *Love your enemies, and do good; and lend expecting nothing thence, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the most high*; imitation of God in goodness and beneficence doth we see found a filial relation unto God: To such God answerably doth bear a paternal kindness and compassion; for, *Like as a father pitieth his children, so* (saith the Psalmist) *the Lord pitieth them that fear him*. He in all respects dealeth with them as with his children; as *ὡς υἱοὶ ἀγαπᾷται*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh: He teacheth, and guideth them with wholesome advice upon all occasions; for, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse*; and, *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord*; He gently removeth and correcteth them; *Whom* (saith the Wise-man) *God loveth, he correcteth, even as a father the son, in whom he delighteth*: He maintaineth them with all needful sustenance and accommodation without their care or trouble; for, *Take no care, saith our Saviour, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be cloathed — for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things*; he so knoweth and considereth it, as to provide, that there shall not be (as the Psalmist affirmeth) *any want unto them that fear him*: He protecteth them from all danger, supporteth them in all distress, and rescueth them from all mischief; for, *His eyes are upon the righteous — to deliver his soul from death, and to keep him alive in famine*; he keepeth all his bones so that none of them is broken — *though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand*; *Many are his afflictions, but the Lord delivereth him out of all*: Such paternal affections doth God bear, such paternal acts doth he exercise toward good men; the which even Pagan Wise-

men

men did apprehend; of whom one thus expresseth himself; God (saith he) hath ^{Patrium habet} a fatherly mind toward good men, and strongly loveth them — ^{Deus adversus} between them ^{bonos viros ad-} and God there is a friendship, which vertue doth conciliate; a friendship do ^{inimicum, et illos} say, yea, a kindred, and similitude; for that a good man is God's disciple and ^{fortiter amat,} imitator, and his true off-spring, whom that magnificent father, no softly ex- ^{Sec. 12. 111.} ^{Sen. de provid.} ^{1. 20} after of vertue, doth after the manner of severe parents, educate hardly.

We may farther observe, that God in his proceedings with men, where- by he particularly designeth to contain them within bounds of duty, and thereby to lead them unto happiness, delighteth to represent himself un- der this obliging and endearing relation: thus he did in regard to his an- cient people upon all occasions express himself: who are Israelites, whose is the ^{Rom. 9. 4.} adoption, saith St. Paul, reckoning this as the first of those privileges, which appertain to the Jews: It was the commission to Moses: Thou shalt say un- ^{Exod. 4. 22.} to Pharaoh; thus saith the Lord, Israel is my Son, even my first born; and I say unto thee; let my Son go, that he may serve me; Moses also foreseeing how that people would misbehave themselves, doth thus in God's name expostu- late with them: Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise? ^{Deut. 32. 6.} is not he thy father, that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? of the rock that begat thee, thou art ungrateful, and hast forgotten God, that formed thee. David also thus addresseth himself to God in their behalf; Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever, and ever; thine O ^{Chr. 29. 10.} Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majesty, and Doubtless, (saith Esay) thou art our Father, though Abraham ^{Isa. 63. 16.} be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou O Lord, art our father, ^{44. 2, 24.} our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting; and I am (saith God in Jeremy) ^{Jer. 31. 9, 20.} a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born; Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child? he is; the LXX render it, in way of assertion, not of in- terrogation.

6. But in the Christian dispensation God more signally representeth him- self in this quality and notion: God herein treateth us not so much, as our Lord and Master, with imperious rigour and awfulness, as our Father, with most gracious condescension, and allurements of kindness: Our Lord (the only ^{Heb. 2. 11.} Son of God, in a sense infinitely most peculiar and high) was not (saith the ^{John 10. 17.} Apostle) ashamed to call us brethren; Go (saith our Lord, for instance of that gracious condescension) to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Fa- ther, and to your Father; both my God, and your God: And such are the ad- vantages peculiar to Christians, grounding this relation toward them, that St. Paul comparing our state in regard to God with that of the Jews, doth thus infer: ^{Gal. 4. 7.} So that thou, (O Christian) art not now a servant, but a son: So it is asserted, and accordingly (which is worth our while distinctly to observe) all the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf are of such a nature, and are set out in such terms as do ground and import this relation: for

The reception of a believer into the participation of the privileges and advantages which Christianity tendereth, is termed ^{Gal. 4. 5.} adoption, the making him ^{Ep. 1. 5. 2. 19.} a son; the adopting him into God's family; the conferring upon him the ti- ^{Rom. 8. 15.} tle and quality of God's child; together with the internal disposition of mind, and the liberty of access and intercourse, which do sure that relation: Who ^{John 1. 12.} (saith St. John) did receive him, to whom he gave the power (or pri- vilege) to become the sons of God, even to them, who believed in his name: And, to name all (saith St. Paul) the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus; ^{Gal. 3. 26.} that is, by sincerely embracing Christianity. And, Behold (saith St. John) ^{John 3. 1.} again in what manner of love the father hath given us, that we should be cal- ^(Eph. 3. 15.) led the sons of God: And, we have not received the spirit of servitude unto ^{Rom. 8. 15.} fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry Abba, fa- ^{Gal. 4. 6.} ther, which is, by which in our prayers with humble affection we freely, confidently and readily according to our Saviour's institution, do say, Our father, (saith the Prophet) (saith God in the Prophet) (saith God in the Prophet)

2. That renovation of our natures, and qualifying our minds as the Go-ospel prescribeth and requireth, is called regeneration, a new creation, a new birth,

John 3. 3. birth, the begetting a new man within us: *If a man be not born from above*
 1 John 3. 9. *he cannot see the kingdom of God*, that is, he cannot be a good Christian:
 Eph. 2. 10. *whoever is begot of God doth not sin*; that is, good Christians do not live in a
 Eph. 4. 21, 24. course of disobedience: *We are $\alpha\rho\tau\epsilon\ \rho\acute{o}\nu\eta\mu\epsilon\iota$, God's work, or production, being*
 Col. 3. 10. *created in Christ Jesus to good works: To have been taught — to put on the*
new man, that is created according to the image of God in righteousness, and
true holiness; in such terms is the effect of the Christian dispensation upon
 our hearts and lives described; and that with the greatest reason; for no act
 of God toward us can be more fatherly, than working in us by his grace the
 principles of Christian life, and the practices springing from it; nothing doth
 2 Pet. 1. 4. nearer advance us to a similitude with God, and a participation of the divine
 nature; nothing doth conciliate from God a more tender affection to us, or
 worketh in us a more dutiful affection toward him, answerable to this rela-
 tion, than doth a hearty compliance with the grace of the Gospel.

4. The resurrection of good Christians after death to a better state of life;
 their entering into immortal bliss and glory, is worthily styled $\pi\alpha\lambda\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\mu\epsilon\iota\varsigma$,
 a being generated and born again; whereby they receive from God another
 more excellent life and state of being, more like and conformable to God:
 1 John 3. 2. for, *we know (saith St. John) that if he shall appear (or, that when he shall*
 2 Cor. 15. 49. *appear, as some Copies read it) we shall be like him*; and, *As (saith St.*
 2 Cor. 3. 18. *Paul) we have born the image of the earthly (Adam,) we shall also bear the*
 Phil. 3. 21. *image of the heavenly: We shall (saith he) be metamorphosed, or transfigured*
 Matt. 19. 28. *into the same image*: and, *They (saith our Saviour) which shall be accounted*
 Luke 20. 35. *worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead — are the sons*
of God, being the sons of the resurrection: that state of bliss is therefore styled
 a portion or inheritance, allotted to sons, and consequent upon such a rela-
 Gal. 4. 7. *on: If sons, saith St. Paul, then heirs; heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ,*
 Rom. 8. 17. *receiving the reward, and promise of an eternal inheritance: Blessed be the*
 Col. 3. 24. *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (saith St. Peter) who according to*
 Heb. 9. 15. *his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrec-*
 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. *tion of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled,*
and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for us.

4. I might adjoin, that Christian men do become the sons of God by the
 Phil. 2. 7. intervention of our Saviour, assuming our nature, and conforming himself to
 Rom. 8. 3, 29. the likeness of men; whereby he becomes the first-born of many brethren:
 Gal. 4. 4, 5. *God (saith St. Paul) sent forth his son, born of a woman, that we might re-*
 Heb. 2. 11, *ceive the privilege of being made sons*: and, *Children (saith the Apostle to the*
 14. 16. *Hebrews) partake of flesh and blood*; whence (as he meaneth to infer) our
 Lord being the Son of God, we upon conjunction of nature with him, and
 as his brethren, become also such; he farther intimateth, that upon this score
 we do surpass Angels themselves; for that *He took not on him the nature of*
angels, but took on him the seed of Abraham; they were not, as we, dignified
 with a fraternal relation to the Son of God.

In so many several respects is God our Father; we are his children as be-
 ing his creatures, made, preserved and maintained by him; as we are intel-
 lectual creatures, being placed in degree and quality of nature so near him;
 as we by virtue and goodness (produced in us by his grace) do any wise
 approach him, resemble him, and partake of his special favour; as we are
 Christians, adopted into his heavenly family, renewed by his holy grace, and
 destinated to a participation of his eternal glory.

Now the consideration of these grounds (each one of them, and all of
 them together) upon which this relation of God unto us is founded, hath
 manifold good uses; It is apt to inform and admonish us concerning many
 necessary duties resulting from it; and to enforce upon us the practice of
 them.

1. It in general may teach, and should mind us what reverence, honour
 and observance is due from us unto God, in equity and justice, according to
 Mal. 1. 6. ingenuity and gratitude: *If (saith God in the Prophet) I be a father, where*
is my honour? Our believing, and acknowledging this relation is vain, if we
 do not yield the respects, and perform the duties answerable thereto. And
 men if

if indeed we are obliged to love, to respect, to observe those, who have been the instruments of God in producing, in nourishing, in breeding us, how much more are we bound to yield the same to him, who principally did, who continually doth bestow upon us our being together with all the supports, the conveniences, the comforts thereof; from whose free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this transitory life, but the inestimable privileges and blessings relating to the future incomparably better state? If we neglect our duty so grounded, may not God justly expostulate with us, as he did of old with those children of his: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise: Is he not thy father, who bought thee?* (or rather, who got thee, *ὁ ἀγοράσας σε*, saith the Greek; and both that and the Hebrew do agree in expression of that thing with our common manner of speech) *hath not he made thee, and established thee?* it is, as is there intimated, a part of extreme folly no less than of injustice and ingratitude to disregard and disobey him, to whom by such bands of duty and obligation we are allied: Indeed the excellency of God's nature doth justly require honour and reverence to him; his sovereign power may also reasonably extort obedience from us, but his paternal benevolence and beneficence are the most obliging grounds, the most kindly inducements to the practice of all piety toward him; we are foolishly unworthy in not being good on the other accounts, in not being so for these reasons we are monstrously base.

2. This consideration may instruct and admonish us what we should be, and how we should behave our selves; for that if we be God's children, it becometh us, and we are obliged in our disposition and demeanour to resemble, to imitate him: it is natural, and proper for children to resemble their parents in their complexion and countenance; to imitate them in their actions and carriage: If ye (argueth our Lord) *were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham*; ye would imitate him in readily believing and obeying God: and, *Ye (saith he again) are of your father the Devil, because ye perform the lusts of your father*; because in his envious, treacherous, murderous disposition and practice ye resemble him: So if we be God's children, we must, according to St. Paul's exhortation; *imitate God, as dear children*; we must in all imitable perfections strive to be like him; so doth the Scripture frequently (both in general, and as to particular cases or matters) apply and inculcate this point; God is holy, and pure, so therefore ought we to be; *As obedient children (saith St. Peter) not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation*: and, *That (saith St. Paul) ye may be blameless, and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke (or irreprehensible sons of God) in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation*: and, *Beloved, now are we sons of God, saith St. John subjoining — And every one that hath this hope (a hope grounded upon, or springing from such a relation) purifieth himself, as God is pure*: God is perfectly just, and righteous, thence we likewise should labour to be such; for, *Every one (saith St. John) that doeth righteousness, is righteous, as he is righteous*: God is perfect in all goodness; so must we endeavour to be, as our Saviour enjoineth us: *Be ye therefore perfect as your Father is perfect*: God is bountiful, gracious and merciful unto all, we thence should learn to be so also; *I say unto you (they are our Saviour's lessons to us) love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your father, which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust*: and again; *Love your enemies, do good, and lend hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest; for he is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil; be ye therefore merciful, as your father also is merciful*. So are we admonished, by the holy Writers, of our engagements to be good on this account: and reason indeed sheweth this relation to be inconsistent with our being otherwise; for similitude only can preserve cognation; things very unlike become formally different in kind and nature thereby; diversity of man-

Deut. 32. 6,

18.

John 8. 39, 44

Eph. 5. 1.

1 Pet. 1. 14.

Phil. 2. 15.

1 John 3. 2, 3.

1 John 3. 7.

Matt. 5. 48.

Matt. 5. 44.

Luke 6. 35.

Tὸ ὁμοίον δ-

μοίον οὐσιν

συγγίς ἐστ.

Plat. Protag

ners

ners signify a difference in blood: if therefore we be closely affixed to material things, or prone to addicted to brutish pleasures, how can we be the children of him that is purely spiritual, altogether intellectual? if we be fierce, hard-hearted, unmerciful or uncharitable, how can we claim kindred with him, who is all love and benignity, all munificence and mercy? there can be no affinity in relation, where there is such a dissimilitude in nature. God also cannot deal with us as children, cannot affect or like us, if we do not resemble him; he can only love good men, and the most certain *επιτελει* (the most perfect Rule the most evident mark) by which we can discern or distinguish what goodness is, is conformity to God's nature, discover'd by his actions; for that cannot otherwise than be very good, wise and reasonable, comely and commendable, convenient and beneficial to us, wherein we resemble God. God's example cannot misguide us, his law and his practice ever consent, his will and nature cannot disagree; nothing therefore can more please him than

Τὸ πρῶτον φιλεῖν, καὶ ἀκούειν τοῦ Θεοῦ; καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐχούσαις ἀρχαῖς λόγον, ὅτι τὸν ὁμοίον τὸ ὁμοίον φιλεῖ καὶ εἰς. Plato de Leg. 4.

what is like him, as even Plato could observe: *What practice (saith he) is acceptable and suitable to God? One; even that, which the Old saying implies, Like is ever a friend to like.* Nothing likewise is more certainly bad, or more displeasing to God, than that which rendreth us in our complexion of mind, or in our behaviour, unlike to God: we by being such, or doing so, must necessarily fall from this high dignity, must *ipso facto* forfeit this excellent privilege of being thus related to God; we thereby become exiles and aliens from his name and family; we prove rebels and foes instead of sons and friends unto him.

3. This consideration may raise us to a just regard, esteem and valuation of our selves, may consequently inspire noble thoughts, and breed generous inclinations in us; may withdraw us from mean, base and unworthy designs or practices; may excite and encourage us to handsome, brave, worthy resolutions and undertakings, suitable to the dignity of our nature, the nobleness of our descent, the eminency of so high a relation, of so near an alliance to God: Even natural light dictateth this use of the notion, and Heathen Philosophers do apply it: *If any one (saith Epictetus) could be affected with this opinion, that we are all originally descended from God, and that God is both the father of men and gods, he would not, I suppose, conceive any thing ignoble or mean concerning himself. If Cæsar should adopt thee, none could endure thy superciliousness; and if thou knowest that thou art God's son, shall it not elevate thy mind?* So that great Philosopher discourseth: and St. Austin relateth this discourse of Varro, the most learned Roman of his time: *It is, said he, useful for Cities, that valiant men should (although it be false) believe themselves born of the gods, that their minds thence bearing a confidence of their divine extraction, may more boldly undertake great enterprizes, pursue them more earnestly, and hence accomplish them more happily, from the security this conceit produceth:* Shall we then, who in so many respects are so highly born, and of so illustrious an extraction (we that are allied to God by our intelligent nature, that are by the heavenly seed of Christian regeneration more deeply implanted into his stock) so far debase our selves, as to affect and pursue trivial, abject, dishonourable things? are we not ashamed of so vile a degeneracy? can we dare so to disparage our high relations? God our heavenly father, Christ our elder brother; the holy Angels, and blessed Saints, our kindred in nature, our brethren in grace? shall we not be afraid for such unworthiness to be degraded, to be rejected, to be disinherited by our holy Father; who is jealous of his honour, who cannot brook to have his blood so stained and defiled, or that such blots and disgraces should stick to his lineage; that his image impressed on us should be so deformed and disfigured; that such disorders and misbehaviours should be committed in his Family? If we do not behave our selves as children, he hath declared that he will disavow and cast us off from being so: *Every plant (our Saviour telleth us) that beareth not good fruit, he lopeth it from his stock, and casteth it away.*

4. This consideration is an especial motive to humility, apt to depress vain conceit and confidence in our selves: for, if we are God's children, so as to have received our

our beings, all our powers and abilities, all our goods and wealth, both internal and external, both natural and spiritual, from his free disposal, so as to be continually preserved and maintained by his providence, to depend for all our subsistence upon his care and bounty; what reason can we have to assume or ascribe any thing to our selves? how vain is it to rely upon any strength or wisdom, any possession or endowment we have, or seem to have? how extremely fond are we if we be raised in our conceit, or are ambitious of reputation upon the score of any such things? for, *Who* (as the *Apostle* invincibly 1 Cor. 4. 7. discourseth) *made thee to differ? what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* To him alone, who is the Authour and Donour of all good things, to the fountain of all power, all joy, all blessings, to *the father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift descendeth*; all praise and glory is due. Jam. 1. 17. John 3. 27. 1 Chron. 29. 14, 15.

5. This consideration sheweth us the reason we have to submit intirely to the providence of God, with contentedness and acquiescence in every condition: for seeing we are *God's possessions* (*Δεσμιονομα*, as *Plato* calleth us) Plat. in Phad. he having made us whatever we are, according to all accounts and capacities, whether as men by his common providence, or as Christians by his especial grace; he surely hath the best right and title that can be upon us; he may justly dispose of us, and use us as he thinks good: We may well thence be obliged according to the Apostolical precept, *to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's.* 1 Cor. 6. 20. If we repine at, or complain of God's dealing with us; may he not justly return to us that answer in the Gospel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Matt. 20. 15. Shall we not suffer God to order his own family according to his discretion and pleasure; to assign what station, to allow what portion he pleaseth to his own children, without our offence or displeasure? Shall we pretend to know better than he what is fit to be done? shall we claim a right to dispense his goods, or desire to be carvers for our selves? If it be unjust and unreasonable to do thus, then in all reason we ought to be content in every state that he disposeth us into, and to undergo patiently whatever he imposeth on us; yea we have reason to be more than content with every thing incident, not only as justly proceeding from him, but as presumable to be good and convenient for us: For is it not fit that we should think that God will order things for the best good of his own children? can we conceive that he willingly will hurt, or will not rather help them; that he will design them any mischief, yea that he will easily suffer it? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may* (God telleth us) *forget, yet he will not forget us.* Ila. 49. 15. Sooner indeed may the most tender parents become unnaturally regardless, spiteful and cruel toward their children, than the immutable God (who in his nature is unexpressibly benign and compassionate) shall neglect the good of his off-spring: good reason therefore have we to be satisfied with all that befalleth us.

6. Particularly this consideration obligeth us to be penitent and chearful in the forest afflictions, as deeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed for and tending to our good: *Thou shalt* (saith God to the Israelites) *consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee*; and, *We* (saith the *Apostle*) Deut. 8. 5. Heb. 12. 9, 10. *have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits, and live? for they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* The punishments inflicted on us by men may perhaps proceed from passion, but God assuredly never inflicts any thing grievous on us but out of pure good will: and what sweeter consolation can there be, than to know, that the most cross and distastful accidents befalling us, do (according to the intention of him that bringeth them on us, and manageth them) conduce to our profit, and shall in the event, if we do patiently receive them, and by our untowardness do not hinder their effect, prove wholesome and advantageous to us.

7. This consideration doth also shew the reason we have to obey those precepts, which injoin us to rely upon God's providence; *to cast all our burthen* Matt. 6. 25.

Phil. 4. 6.
1 Pet. 5. 7.
Psal. 37. 5.
Eccl. 5. 23.

and care upon God; to be solicitous and anxious about nothing which concerneth our sustenance; for children commonly (especially such as have able and kind parents) do live altogether void of care concerning their maintenance, being assured that their parents will concern themselves to provide whatever is necessary or convenient for them; and how much more have we reason to live free of solicitude in such respects, who have a Father so infinitely sufficient to supply all our wants, and so tenderly affected toward us; so ever present with us, and always vigilant over us; who cannot but see and know our needs; and can most easily satisfy them, and is no less willing and ready, if we trust in him, to do it? *Do not (saith our Lord) take care, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed—for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* The like reason did even natural light suggest to a Philosopher: *If, saith he, kindred with Cæsar, or with any other great man in Rome, is sufficient to make a man live securely, without contempt, and without fear; will not the having God our maker, and father, and guardian, free us from griefs and fears?* 'Tis extreme infidelity concerning either the providence of God, or his power, or his goodness (that is, the practical disbelief of this point, or in our hearts disavowing God to be our Father,) which causeth all that carking and distraction of mind, that fear of wants, that grief for losses and disappointments, which do commonly possess men; together with those covetous desires, and unjust practices, with which the world aboundeth: He can hardly be guilty of them, who believeth and considereth, that God doth thus stand related and affected toward him.

Mat. 6. 31, 32.

Epist. Arr. 1.
9.

Mat. 7. 9, 10.

11.
Luke 11. 13.

8. This consideration doth more generally in all regards serve to breed and cherish our faith, to raise our hope, to quicken our devotion: for whom shall we confide in, if not in such a Father? from whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath already given us so much, even all that we have? to whom can we have recourse freely and cheerfully, upon any occasion, if not to him, who so kindly inviteth and calleth us to him, in so endearing terms, with so obliging an appellation? If we in any need, corporal or spiritual, request succour or supply from him, can we suspect that such a Father (so infinitely wise, so able, so good) will refuse us, or can fail us? No; *What man is there of us, that if his son ask him bread, will give him a stone; or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent?* If we then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to our children; how much more shall your father in heaven give good things to them that ask him? So doth our Saviour with most convincing force of reason move us to the duty of prayer, with faith and confidence of good success. St. Luke hath it, *How much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?* implying, that upon account of this relation we may in all our spiritual needs (if we do need light and direction in our doubts, or strength against temptations, or comfort in our distresses) be assured of finding requisite assistance and relief. We should therefore upon all exigencies address our selves to God, not with the fear of slaves, nor with the suspicion of strangers, but with dispositions of heart futable to children, with a reverent love, and humble confidence, and cheerful hope.

9. Lastly, considering this point will direct and prompt us how to behave our selves towards all God's creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities: If God be the Father of all things, they are all thence in some sort our brethren, and so may claim from us a fraternal affection and demeanour answerable thereto: shall we then scorn, abuse, trample or tyrannize over any of them? doth it become us to do so? will our common Father like it, or endure it? If we are all branches sprouting from one stock, or streams issuing from the same source of divine beneficence and fecundity; if we are members of one body, of one commonwealth, of one family; we are then surely obliged to an universal benevolence, to be kind and compassionate, to be helpful and beneficial unto all, so far as our capacity reacheth; we are to endeavour, as we can, to preserve the order, and promote the welfare of the world, and of all things in it: Even upon this score the meanest of God's creatures is not to be despised, the vilest worm is not to be misused by us; since even it is the work of his hands, and the subject of his care, yea the object of his

his kindness, *Who* (as the *Psalmist* telleth us) *is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works*: But especially toward those Beings, who according to a more peculiar and excellent sense are entitled the sons of our father, and to whom we are more nearly allied by our better part (that divine breath, which both they and we drew from God) toward all intellectual Beings, we do learn hence our respective duties; of love and respect toward those our elder brethren, the *Angels* (those of them, which have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty) of charity and good will toward each other; which if we do not maintain, we may consider that we thereby are first undutiful and unkind to God our common father, and then even to our selves: we do hate and harm both God's relations and our own (God's children, and our brethren) by hating or harming any man whatever; especially any good man, any Christian brother; who by other more peculiar bands is straitly tied to us; who upon so many better and higher accounts standeth related unto God, and to our selves. *Aristotle* saith, that all men, upon grounds of natural cognition and similitude are naturally friends to one another; much more are all good men so by participation of a more excellent nature, and by a nobler resemblance: whence 'tis *St. Paul's* precept to Christians, that they should be *φιλαδελφία εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι*, that they should bear a natural affection each to other in brotherly love. Christians are in a more peculiar and eminent manner styled brethren; and that charity, which in respect to others is called *philanthropy* (or humanity) in regard to them is named *philadelphia* (or brotherly affection:) hence to perform all fraternal offices toward every christian, to wish heartily and earnestly to promote his good, to compassionate, and (as we are able) to relieve his evils, to bear his infirmities, and to comport with unkindnesses from him, and the like duties, are incumbent on us, as peculiar to our profession.

These are the principal uses which the consideration of this point suggesteth. Now God Almighty, the great Father of all things, and especially our gracious Father in *Christ Jesus*, grant that by his holy grace we may perform all filial duty toward him (rendering unto him all love and reverence, all praise and thanks, all worship and obedience, together with all faith and hope in him) that we may behave our selves in all things as becometh this relation, that we may resemble him in all goodness, that we may persist here continually in his favour, and obtain hereafter the blessed inheritance from him; this he of infinite mercy vouchsafe unto us, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. *Amen.*

Even to God the Father, the Creatour, Preserver and Governour of all things, the Authour and Donour of all good; to God the Son, the Redeemer of all the world, and foundation of all spiritual blessings; to God the Holy Ghost, the fountain of all true goodness, joy and comfort, be for ever and ever all glory and praise. Amen.

Εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντες τὸ λόγον ἔχον. Ant. 3. 4.
Εὐχαριστοῦντες, ἢ χ. αἰμαῖα, ἢ σπέρμα, ἢ τὸ αὐτὸν, ἀλλὰ νῦν, ἢ θείας δυνάμεως μέτοχοι. Ant. 2. 1.

Si ab uno Deo inspirati omnes, & animati sumus, quid aliud quam fratres sumus, & quidem conjunctiores quidam animis, quam qui corporibus: ergo pro bellis immanibus habendi sunt, qui hominibus nocent. Lactant. 10. 6.

Ἀνδρόποδοι, ἢ ἀνέχοντες ἀδελφῶν σου, ὅς ἔχει Δία πατέρα. Epict. Art. 1. 13.

Οἰκῶν ἅπας ἀνθρώπων ἀνδρῶν, ἢ φίλον. Arist. Eth. 8. 1.

Rom. 12. 10.

The Father Almighty.

SERMON XI.

REVEL. XI. 17.

O Lord God Almighty.

EVERY attribute of God is a proper and useful object of our consideration; as being apt to mind us of our duty, and to excite us to the practice thereof; to beget in us those dispositions of mind (that love and reverence toward God, that faith and hope in him) which we ought to have; and to draw from us real performances of obedience to him: Each of them doth ground obligations to piety, and yieldeth arguments to the practice thereof. To which purposes, that considering this divine attribute, *Almighty* (mentioned in our text) doth much avail, and that it therefore well deserveth to be pressed upon us, will appear more distinctly from the application we shall make thereof. At present we may perceive how considerable it is, by observing in gross; 1. That it is frequently in holy Scripture singled forth, as most proper to God, as most fully expressive of his glorious excellency and Majesty; particularly the most illuminate Ministers of God's praise, the *Seraphims* in *Esay*, the four Wights (or living creatures) in this Book, and the twenty four Elders in this place, do therefore use it. 2. It is that attribute, which is alone most expressly set down in our *Creed*, as especially necessary to be believed and considered: We say therein, *I Believe in God the Father Almighty*. 3. It is that with which we daily address our devotions unto God: In our prayers we say, *Almighty, and most merciful Father*; in our praises we cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, or (which is the same) *Lord God of Sabaoth*. It seems therefore fit and useful, that we should well understand the proper and full meaning thereof, together with the obligations grounded thereon, and the inducements it affordeth to good practice; that so when we hear it used in Scripture, when we profess to believe it, when we apply it to God in our devotions, we may so reflect thereupon, as to be admonished of our duty, and moved to the performance thereof. First therefore I will endeavour somewhat to explain it; then shall make a practical application thereof.

The title, Epithet, or Attribute *παντοκράτης*, which we (finding no other word more properly and fully to express it) do render *Almighty*, or omnipotent, is frequently in a manner peculiar and characteristical ascribed to God: The use thereof in the *New Testament* is, by citation or imitation, transferred from the *Greek* of the *Old*, where it serveth to express those two famous and usual names of God, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai*; especially it answereth to the former; for the latter is only rendred thereby in some places of the Book of *Job*: but the former, *Sabaoth* (when interpreted, and not left in its own sound) is constantly rendred *παντοκράτης*. I call *Sabaoth* a name of God: for that it is so, it is in several places expressly affirmed; as in *Jeremy*: *Their Redeemer is strong, Jehovah Sabaoth is his name*; and in *Esay*: *For they call themselves of the holy City, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; the Lord of hosts is his name*; and in *Amos*: *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth*

*ΟΛΟΙΣ ἀνέ-
στη, οἱς Σα-
βαωθ ὄνομα
ἐστὶν ἔδω-
κεν. Verf. Si-
byll. lib. 1.
Jer. 50. 34.
Isa. 48. 2.

Amos 4. 13.

cleaveth unto man, what is his thought—*Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his name* (from a sort of *Jave*, called *Zw: Zababai*, mentioned in some Pagan Writers, Cicero, Aristoph. &c. Seld. de Diis S. cap. 3.) was, as some Criticks suppose, deduced.) Now as all the Names and appellations of God are significant, and denote some perfection, or some prerogative belonging to him (as *Jehovah* signifieth his self-subsistence, independency, immutability and eternity; *Elohim* his omnipotence; *Shaddai* his all-sufficiency; *Adonai* his supreme dominion and authority) so doth this name, or Title, *Sabaoth*, primitively seem to import God's universal conduct and managery of all creatures; for all things in the World, as being ranged in a goodly and convenient order, (like an army marching in array, or marshalled to battel) are called armies, or *Sabaoth*. Thus (after the history of the creation it is said) *The heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them* (*πᾶς ὁ στρατός αὐτῶν*, Gen. 2. 1. all the furniture, or all the *Battalion* of them) and, *By the word of the Lord* Psa. 33. 6. *were the heavens made* (saith the Psalmist) *and all the host of them*; and, *Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye Ministers of his, that do his pleasure*; that is, all creatures, which are subject to his command, and subservient to his will; and, *Lift up* (saith *Esay*) *your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power, not one faileth*: Where God is represented to us as the General of an Army, drawing forth and ordering his creatures, as a General summoneth to a rendezvous, mustereth and embattail-eth his troops: hence this title of *Sabaoth*, which is rendred *πᾶς ὁ στρατός*, doth seem derived.

But we need not deal so strictly, as to limit the sense of this word, according to its original rise, or its use in translation; but since it hath been authenticated by its use in the holy fountains of truth, the Old and New Testament, and is there used so, as to signify or imply the sum of divine perfections and pre-eminences; being (as it seems) selected especially for that purpose, we may presume to take it in its common latitude, for *ὁ πᾶντος κρείων*, or *ὁ πᾶντος κρείων ὁ θεός*, according to which extent, it may have various importances, somewhat different. It may accordingly denote, 1. Right or authority over all beings; *Omni-potestas*: and, 2. A power or ability to do all things; *Omni-potentia*. 3. The actual exercise of such authority, and such power, in ruling and disposing all things; *Omni-potentatus*. 4. The possession of all things, or the containing and holding all things in his hand; *Omni-tenentia* ('tis St. Augustine's word.) 5. The preservation or upholding of all things in their being and state: for the word *κρείων*, according to its propriety and ordinary use, may infer and ground all these significations; and according to them all, God is truly *πᾶς ὁ στρατός*. Let us survey the particulars, and shew how God, especially in holy Scripture, is represented in respect to them.

1. God is *πᾶς ὁ στρατός*, as having a just right and authority over all things; he naturally is the sovereign Lord and Emperour of the world; for whatever imaginable reason or ground there is of authority, doth in respect to all things agree unto God. Aristotle, in his *Politicks*, discourseth thus: Government doth aim at, and tend to the mutual benefit of the governour and governed; he therefore, who is most able and best disposed to provide for, and procure the common benefit, is according to natural reason and justice (secluding other considerations of laws and compacts, of former constitutions, of present possession, and the like) to be the Governour; or he deserves, and is fit to be so, and (no other reason hindring) becometh such: (That, saith the Philosopher, *τὸ δυνάμειον φύσει κρείων, ἀρχὴν φύσει, ὡς δυνάμις φύσει.* which naturally is apt, or able to provide, doth naturally rule, and naturally lord-eth.) Whence the soul hath a right to govern the body, and men naturally do rule over beasts; and were there any such persons, as did without any question very eminently exceed others in wisdom and goodness, to them according to natural congruity the government of others would appertain; the common advantage so requiring; and if such excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, then God, who in wisdom and goodness doth incomparably surpass all things, hath assuredly the right to govern all. So a Pagan Authour could discourse. *There is* (saith Cicero) *nothing better than God; therefore it is necessary the World* Nihil est praestantius Deo; ab eo igitur necesse est mundum regi. Cic. de N. D. 2.

should

- Rom. 16. 17. *should be ruled by him*: He is the *Only wise* (as St. Paul telleth us) and thence
 Luke 18. 19. *most able*; he is *only good* (as our Saviour teacheth us) and thence *most apt* to
 manage all things for the general welfare and benefit of the world. If also
 eminency of power doth qualify for dominion (as it surely doth; for that which
 cannot be withstood, must in reason be submitted to; it is vain to question
 that authority, which by force altogether irresistible can assert and maintain
 it self) God hath the only right, nothing in the world being able to contest
 Psa. 89. 6, 8. his Title; for, *Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among
 the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of Hosts, who
 is a strong Lord like unto thee?* says the holy Psalmist contemplating this divine
 attribute: all things are weak and feeble in comparison; are altogether in his
 hand and under his feet; are thoroughly at his discretion and disposal: *The*
 Jer. 10. 10. *Lord* (saith the Prophet) *is the true God, and the everlasting King: at his wrath
 the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*
 Psa. 66. 3, 7. And, *How terrible* (saith the Psalmist) *art thou in thy works? through the great-
 ness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee—He ruleth by
 his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt
 themselves.*

If also to have made all things, and to preserve them, doth create a right
 of governing (as it must needs do so; for what can we justly challenge a do-
 minion over, if not over our own works, over that which we continually
 keep and nourish; over that which altogether depends upon us, and which
 subsists at our pleasure?) then well may the *Apocalyptical* Elders thus acknow-
 ledge: *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power* (that
 is, to possess the royal Majesty and sovereign dominion over the world) *for
 thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are, and were created.* Well

- Apoc. 4. 11. *might every creature, that is in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth,
 and those things which are in the sea, and all things in them, cry out there,
 To him that sitteth upon the throne (and to the Lamb) be the blessing, and the
 * *honour, and the glory, * and the dominion, for ever and ever.* Well might King
 Isa. 37. 16. *Hezekiah* say, *O Lord of hosts: thou art the God; thou alone of all the Kingdoms
 of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth: And the Levites in Nehemiah;
 Neh. 9. 6. Thou, even thou art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven and earth; the hea-
 ven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth, and all things that are therein;
 the sea, and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all, and all the host of
 heaven worshippeth thee. Thus is God *παντοκράτωρ*; as he is upon all imagi-
 nable accounts, and according to all reasonable grounds of right, the rightful
 Virg. *Æn.* 10. *Sovereign of all things; as he is,—Divinque hominumque potestas,* as the wisest
 Poet doth acknowledge and style him.**

2. He is also such in regard to his infinite power, as that word may signify
 Omnipotent. Natural light affordeth pregnant arguments of the greatness of
 his power, displayed in the constitution and conservation of the World; his
 disposing so stupendiously vast, so unconceivably various creatures, into so
 comely and stable a posture; whence *his eternal power and divinity are dis-
 cerned* (as St. Paul telleth us:) for he that could effect so much, his power
 must needs be far greater than we can imagine or comprehend: To natural
 light, I say, it is incomprehensibly great, and exceedeth all definite limits;
 but holy Scripture more clearly and fully declareth the extent of his power;
 asserting, that it is not only in respect to our weak conceit and narrow capa-
 city, but in it self truly infinite, reaching the utmost possibility of things:
 It teacheth us, that whatever is not contrary to his nature, or to his essential
 perfections (to his goodness, fidelity, holiness, wisdom) which it doth not
 mis-become him to do; or which is not repugnant to the nature of things to
 be done (that is, which doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is im-
 possible, and becomes no object of power) for such things *he cannot do, be-
 cause he is omnipotent*, as St. *Austin* acutely says; he is able with perfect ease
 and facility to atchieve it: There is among things good and possible nothing
 so difficult, but he can perform it; nothing so strong and stubborn, but he
 can subdue it. *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* said God to *Abraham*,
 when *Sarah* doubted, or wondred concerning the promise, that she in so ex-
 treme

*Deus propter
 rem quadam
 non potest,
 quia omnipo-
 tens est.
 Aug. de Civ.
 D. 5. 10.
 Gen. 18. 14.*

trement an age should become fruitful. Behold (said the Prophet Jeremy in his Jer. 32. 17, 27. prayer) *thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great and thy stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.* Οὐκ ἀδυνατῶσι Θεῷ πᾶν ἔργον. Luke 1. 37. Nothing (that can be said, or conceived, or performed) shall be impossible to God, if he pleaseth to design, or undertake it, said the Angel to the blessed Virgin, when he delivered so strange a message to her concerning an event so wonderful and supernatural, as our Saviour's conception of her. That a rich man should be induced intirely to comply with God's will, and willingly to part with all, our Saviour affirmed exceedingly difficult (hardly any thing could be supposed more difficult; harder it was, than for a Camel to pass through the eye of a Needle;) but to satisfy his disciples scruple thence arising, he subjoins: *With men* (or according to the common sense of men) *this is impossible, but to God all things are possible.* In thine hand (said King Jehoshaphat) *there is power, and might, so that none is able to withstand thee.* And King Nebuchadnezzar having felt an experiment of his power, and being returned to a right understanding, confesseth thus: *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* The Lord of hosts (saith the Prophet) *hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* To stop the Sun in his career, to make the Sea stand upon an heap, to draw streams of water from a rock, to restrain fire from burning, to restore the blind and lame, to raise the dead, to suspend, thwart, invert the course of nature; with all such things, which we so wonder at, and term miracles; are comparatively but slender, and, as it were, perfunctory instances of his power: for with the greatest ease, by the least exertion of his power, by a thought, a look, a touch, a word, the greatest things are performed: *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.* *He overturneth the mountains in his anger, and shaketh the earth out of her place: The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.* These seem great and strange effects of power; yet in respect to what he can do, and hath done, they are small: for he at first made the whole world with a word; so the history of the Creation expresseth it, and so the Psalmist telleth us: *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth:* And by a word he doth preserve it, upholding (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) *all things by the word of his power,* or by his powerful word: And by a word he can destroy and annihilate all things; yea more easily, in a manner he can do it even by his mere silence, or by withdrawing that salutary breath, by virtue of which all things subsist: *Thou hidest thy face* (saith the Psalmist) *they are troubled; thou withholdest thy breath, they dye, and return to their dust.* For we may consider, that in this respect also God is all-powerful, as being the source from which all power is derived, by which all power is sustained, upon which all power doth depend: He not only can do all things inclusively, but exclusively, or so that nothing can be done without him. That of our Saviour, *Without me ye can do nothing,* is not only true in spiritual, but in all other matters. He (as St. Paul preached at Athens) *giveth life* (or being, with all vital faculties) *and breath* (that is, all natural powers) *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather by him) *we live, and move, and have our being;* that is, whatever we are, whatever we have, whatever we can do, doth proceed from him, doth depend upon him. Thus is God *παντοκράτωρ*, as All-powerful.

3. God is also so, by reason that he doth actually exercise all dominion, and doth exert his power continually, according to his good pleasure; he not only hath a just title to govern all things, and a perfect ability to sway in all matters, but he constantly useth them: *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his Kingdom ruleth over all. God is the King of all the Earth—God reigneth over the heathen* (or the nations) *God sitteth upon the Throne of his holiness: The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himself to behold the things, that are in heaven and earth?* It is indeed, as the holy Man saith, a great condescension in God, that he will vouchsafe to have the inspection and administration of things

so much inferiour to him, yet for the common good of his creatures he is pleased to do it: *Thine* (saith King David) *O Lord, is the Kingdom, and thou art exalted as head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; in thine hand is power and might, &c.* He is indeed the only Governour, absolutely, originally and independently so; ὁ μόνος διδούς, the only Potentate, as St. Paul calleth him; All authority and power are imparted by him, and subordinate to him; from his disposal and direction all Potentates do receive them; in his name and behalf, by virtue of his commission and command, as his delegates and Ministers, for his honour, interest and service they administer any just dominion, or power: It was *Nebuchadnezzar's* doom to be driven from men, until he did understand and embrace this truth, so necessary for all Governours to know and consider, that, *The most High ruleth in the Kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will; that, His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.* Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another. There is no power but from God; the powers that are, are appointed by God. The judgment is God's (as Moses said in his charge to the Judges of Israel,) being exercised by his order, and in his behalf: Thus is God *πρωτογενής*, as the only absolute Sovereign Lord, the author and fountain of all just authority, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, as the Scripture often doth style him.

4. God is also *πρωτογενής*, as the true proprietary and just possessor of all things. Blessed be Abraham (said King Melchisedeck) of the most high God, Possessor of heaven and earth; and, Behold (said Moses to his people) the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's, thy God; the earth also with all that is therein; and, The earth (saith the Psalmist) is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein, for he hath founded it upon the Seas, and prepared it upon the floods; and, The heavens, saith he again, are thine, the earth also is thine; as for the world, and the fulness thereof (that is, all which the world contains, all with which it is furnished and replenished) thou hast founded them; and, The Sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land: all things they say are the goods and possessions of God; proving it from hence, that he made them, and thereby acquired a propriety in them; for there is no more evident and perfect ground of propriety than this: the products of our invention and care, the fruits of our endeavour and industry, even we do think that reasonably we may call our own, and justly claim the enjoyment of: how much more he, that by an original, uncommunicated, independent wisdom and power, hath contrived and produced all things? from thence surely do result such a title to them all, that the entire and absolute disposal of them doth appertain to him; so that he may apply them, as the potter doth the vessels which he maketh (it is the Scripture comparison) to what use he thinketh good; that he may freely place and bestow them where he pleaseth; that he may take them away, or transfer them, when he seeth fit: they can never be so alienated from him, that the enjoyment of them doth not wholly depend on him, and that at pleasure (his wisdom and goodness permitting, his truth and word being solved) he may not resume them to himself.

5. God is also *πρωτογενής*, as containing and comprehending all things by his immense presence and infinite capacity: it is a name which the Jewish Doctors commonly apply to God, *hamakom*, the place, because all things do subsist in him; he being (as St. Hierome speaks) *infused through all things, and circumfused about all things; so as to penetrate them within, and to contain them without; so as to be within all things, not included, and without all things, not excluded: and, We do not* (saith Minutius Felix) *only live in the eye, but in the bosom of God.* The whole world, how vast soever it seemeth to our narrow conceit, is but as a drop, or as an atome of dust in his hand: Behold (saith the Prophet elegantly and truly) *the nations are as a drop of a bucket*

compon

In omnibus infusus, & circumfusus, ut cuncta penetret interior, & contineat exterior. Hier. ad Marcell. 5.

Intra omnia nec inclusus, extra omnia nec exclusus.

Non solum in oculis Dei, sed in sinu vivimus. Minut. F.

Solus est omnia: opus suum & extra & intra tenet. Sen. Praef. Nat. Q.

Isa. 40. 15. 48. 13. 40. 12.

ket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing; all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity: and, I fill heaven and earth, saith God in Jeremy: and King Solomon in his prayer saith more; Behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: and, Whither (saith the Psalmist) shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence; if I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

6. Lastly, God is *παντοκράτωρ* in regard that he sustains and preserves all things. When (saith Saint Gregory Nyssen) we hear the word *παντοκράτωρ*, we understand this, that God containeth all things in being: Thou, (say the Levites in Nebemiah,) even thou art God alone, thou hast made heaven and earth, the heaven of heavens with all their hosts, the earth and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

Col. 1. 17. Heb. 1. 3.
"Ὁ γὰρ τῆς παντοκράτου οὐκ ἀνέστη, ἡτορμή, καὶ πάλιν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκτίσει, Greg. Nyss.
Neh. 9. 6.

In all these respects and senses doth the title *παντοκράτωρ* (which we for want of a word more adequate and expressive, do render *Almighty*) belong to God: The Greek word in the latitude of its signification, according to its etymology, comprehendeth all these senses, and the design in its use, as we before touched, warranteth the taking it in the largest acception; but however it certainly respecteth the former senses, denoting the absolute Universal Sovereignty, and the immense irresistible power of God: the belief and consideration of which particulars is of Great importance, and may have a very useful influence upon our practice: for,

I. If God be the Just Sovereign of all things, having a right to govern the World, and actually exercising it; then

1. We see our condition and state here in this world. We live not in an anarchy, or in perfect liberty; we are not our own Masters, or have a right to guide our actions according to our own will, or after our own fancy; but are under government; a government most absolute and arbitrary; the laws whereof we may not dispute, the proceedings whereof we cannot resist. Whence

Τὸν θεὸν μὴ
παύσαι, καὶ
ἐν τῇ ἐκτίσει
ἐκείνῳ.

2. We understand our duty, that as subjects and vassals, we are obliged to render all awful reverence, worship and obedience to God; humbly to adore the Majesty, readily to perform the commands, and patiently to submit to the will of our great Sovereign: to conform all our actions to that heavenly law, under which we are born and live in the world.

We do not (even Plutarch could tell us) come hither into life to make laws, but to obey those which are appointed by God, who ordereth all things; to observe the decrees of destiny and providence.

Ὁ δὲ συνδεδωκὸς ἀποδοῦναι
τῷ θεῷ, καὶ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ
ἀποδοῦναι, καὶ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ
ἀποδοῦναι. Plut. Consol. ad Apol.

3. Hence we may discern the heinousness of every sin, or transgression of God's law; it receiving great aggravation hence. It hence appeareth not only a matter of simple folly, or private inconvenience, (contrary to our reason) but of publick mischief and general ill consequence; being committed against the crown and dignity of God Almighty; against the peace and order of the World; which subsist by the observation of his laws. Every sin is an act of high rebellion, a breach of our natural allegiance, a lifting up our selves (as is said of Babel) against our Sovereign; an infringing that right, and violating that honour of his, which he by his place and office is concerned to maintain and vindicate.

Numb. 15. 30.
Dan. 5. 20.

4. We may hence learn what reason we have to be content in every condition, and to undergo patiently every event befalling us: for that our station is allotted to us by an unquestionable right, and all things are dispensed to us by a common law, from which nothing can be exempted; for that things come not by a blind necessity or chance, but are disposed and managed

Nihil horum indignandum est; in eum intravimus mundum, in quo his legibus vivitur. Sen. Epist. 91.

Virum bonum concedas necesse est summa pietatis erga Deum esse; itaque quicquid illi acciderit, a quo anima sustinetur; scilicet enim id accidisse lege divina, quod universa procedunt. Sen. Ep. 76.

indeed intolerable arrogance and forwardness in us to desire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are subject; to wish our selves out of that order, in which the all-guiding providence hath set us; to be dissatisfied with any thing, which by the supreme wisdom is assigned to us: It becomes

1 Sam. 3. 18. eth us to say with old Eli; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good;*

Psal. 39. 9. to say upon all occasions with David: *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth,*

Πάσα θάυμαζεν, πάλαι ἐπαύειν, πάλαι ἀνεκτάς, ἀποδέχεται τὰς ἀπορίας ἑώρα, καὶ παύσαι πολλάκις, διὰ τὸ ἀγνοεῖν ἡ, καὶ ἀκατάληκτον ὡς δὲ τῶν ἀπορίας. Damasc. de O. F. 2. 19.

ged by Sovereign reason and wisdom. *We must (saith an Ethnick Philosopher) not be displeased at any of these things; for we are come into that world, where we must live by these laws: and, A good man must needs be granted to be highly pious toward God; he therefore will sustain all accidents with equanimity; as knowing them to happen unto him by a divine law, by which all things proceed.* It were in-

deed intolerable arrogance and forwardness in us to desire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are subject; to wish our selves out of that order, in which the all-guiding providence hath set us; to be dissatisfied with any thing, which by the supreme wisdom is assigned to us: It becomes 1 Sam. 3. 18. eth us to say with old Eli; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good;* Psal. 39. 9. to say upon all occasions with David: *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it;* upon this consideration we should not only be satisfied with, and acquiesce in, but praise and adore all occurrences of providence, how unkindly soever, and distasteful they appear to us; supposing a just and reasonable cause to lie under them, although indiscernible to us. Yea farther,

5. It is a matter of great consolation to reflect, that we and all the world are under such a government; 'tis a common felicity, 'tis our particular happiness that we are so; for 'tis no unjust usurper, 'tis no merciless tyrant, 'tis no fond, no weak, no careless person that we are in subjection to, but a most just, most mild, most gracious, most wise, most powerful, most vigilant Lord; who will deal most equally, and most benignly with us; who sincerely and earnestly tenders our welfare; who is watchful and careful for our good; who is able to provide for all our needs, and to protect us from all mischief; all whose laws do only aim at our benefit; all whose proceedings toward us are full of equity, goodness and truth; who will not only favourably accept, but most bountifully recompence our obedience; whom to serve and obey is a privilege, far better and more desirable for us, than to be free, than to be wholly at our own disposal, and under our own guidance; the very nature and the end of his government being only to preserve us, and to rescue us from the errors, the slaveries, the vexations and miseries we are apt to incur; by virtue of whose universal dominion we are secured, that no malice of devil, no injustice of men, no sort of enemy whatever (excepting our own wilful disobedience to his laws, and directions) shall be able to do us harm; for all them he governs, and he curbs no less than our selves. Of this our King it is truly said, that *Justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face; that, He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings: that, The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre; that, His yoke is easie, and his burthen light.*

Psal. 89. 14. *Justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face; that, He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings: that, The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre; that, His yoke is easie, and his burthen light.* Psal. 145. 17. *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings: that, The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre; that, His yoke is easie, and his burthen light.* Apoc. 15. 3. *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings: that, The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre; that, His yoke is easie, and his burthen light.* Psal. 45. 6. *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings: that, The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre; that, His yoke is easie, and his burthen light.* Matt. 11. 30. *In confidence of his protection we may say with the Psalmist; the Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear; the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? God is our refuge and strength—therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. In God have I put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me. Well therefore may we, may the whole world in consideration of our being under so good a governour be excited to joy and jubilation with the Psalmist; O clap your hands all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph; for the Lord most high is terrible, he is a great King over all the earth. Say among the nations, that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved, he shall judge the people righteously, let the heavens rejoyce, and let the earth be glad, &c. Let the Flouds clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.*

Psal. 47. 1. 96. *the voice of triumph; for the Lord most high is terrible, he is a great King over all the earth. Say among the nations, that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved, he shall judge the people righteously, let the heavens rejoyce, and let the earth be glad, &c. Let the Flouds clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.* Revel. 19. 6. *with equity.* Or with those in the Revelation: *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad, and rejoyce, and give honour unto him. All the world hath exceeding reason not only to be content, but to rejoyce and tri-*

triumph in being subject to such a Governour, so able, so willing to maintain peace, good order, and equity therein: so that we also are obliged to bless and thank God, that he condescends so far, and vouchsafes to undertake the tuition and oversight of the world; obeying the Psalmist's exhortation; *The Lord (saith he) hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all: therefore, Bless the Lord ye his angels — Bless the Lord all his hosts — Bless the Lord all his works in all places of his dominion; imitating herein those Elders in the Revelation; who say, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken unto thee thy great power, and hast reigned.* They who imagine the world is not governed at all, but that with unloosed reins it runneth on at random, are very foolish; but more such are they, who wish it to be so, and in their desires depose God from his throne; for they do wish for anarchy and confusion in their Country, instead of the most excellent establishment and order, maintained by the wisest and ablest government. That good Emperour was better advised, and better affected, who said, *What good were it for me to live in a world void of a Deity, and Providence? and, Why should I desire to continue in such a casual jumble, and rout of things?* The world, he well supposed, divine governance being excluded, would be a strange disorderly and uncomfortable place to abide in. And old Socrates, in the *Phædon*, discoursing about his departure hence, comforts himself in that, as he hoped, he was going thither, where the Gods did preside with a nearer inspection, and a more apparent influence: these were worthy desires, and noble hopes proceeding from natural reason, and moral virtue in such persons; but much more reason, and much greater obligation have we to be satisfied with, and to comfort our selves in the assurance, that all things, even at present, here are moderated by a superintendency far more equal, and more propitious, than they could imagine or hope. These, and such like practical uses the belief and consideration of God's sovereign authority and dominion do afford: the belief and consideration of God's immense and uncontrollable power is also of very great importance, and influence upon practice.

1. It serveth to beget in us a due awe, and dread of God: considering God's other attributes may breed in us a high esteem, and hearty love of God, but the consideration of his power is that which naturally and reasonably produceth a great fear of him: he is most amiable for his goodness, and in regard to his wisdom greatly venerable, but his power, arming the rest, renders him exceedingly terrible. *Hear ye this (it is said in the Prophet Jer. 5. 21, 22. Jeremy) O foolish people, and without understanding; fear ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence, which hath placed the sand for the bounds of the sea, &c? and, Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, Jer. 10. 6, 7. Thou art great, and thy name is great in might, who would not fear thee, O thou King of nations? and, I will shew you (saith our Saviour) whom ye should fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed (or who beside killing) hath power to cast into hell; I say unto you fear him: great reason he had so earnestly to inculcate that admonition, the case being so apparent, and so important.*

2. This point doth consequently in high measure dissuade and deter us from sin, implying the extreme folly in committing it, and the inevitable mischief following it. The consideration of God's other attributes infer it to be great baseness and stupidity to oppose or displease God, but the consideration of this demonstrateth it to be infinite madness to do so. For to wrong, dishonour and displease him, that is so good and beneficent to us is great dissingenuity and unworthiness: to swerve from his advice and direction, who is only and perfectly wise is highly vain and unreasonable; but for so feeble, and impotent things, as we are, to contest with, and withstand, to provoke and offend omnipotency (that which with infinite ease can defeat and subdue us, can depress us into misery, can crush us into nothing) is most palpably the top of insolent wildness. It is *Moses* his argument, where-

Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κατὰ θεῶν, ἃ
πεποισας κατὰ; Ant. 2. Sect. 11.

Τί ἐν ἰσχυρῷ εἰκόλῳ συζηματι,
καὶ πεποισας τούτῳ ἐνδραστεῖν; Idem 6.
Sect. 10.

Luke 12. 5.
Μὴ τὸ δὲ
τοῦ θεοῦ.

Deut. 10. 17. whereby he presseth obedience to his Law: *Circumcise therefore, saith he, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked, for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, and a mighty, and a terrible.*

'Tis no less an evidently convincing, than a vehemently affecting increpation, that of St. Paul: *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy, are we stronger than he?* and, God himself in Job useth the like scheme of speech: *Hast thou an arm like God, and canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* if thou art as strong, if thou hast such an arm, then mayst thou perhaps dare to contend with him, and adventure to provoke him; but if thou no-wise art his match, if thou art infinitely short of him in strength, how vain and rash a thing is it for thee to defy him thus, to enter with him into the lists, to strive and grapple with him? to do, as the sinner in Job is expressed doing: *He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.*

All presumptuous sinning is described and represented in Scripture as a comparing, and in effect preferring our power and force in regard to the power of God; or as a tempting God, and challenging him to battel; or as an actual coping, contention and fighting with him; sinners as such are styled the adversaries of God, and rebels against him; such as rise up, and lift up themselves, and raise their hand against him; which doth either imply in them a more than Gigantick pride and arrogance in over-valuing their own power, and under-valuing the power of God (which doth also involve infidelity, and disbelief of God's omnipotence; for he who believeth that, cannot take himself for God's match, or dare to struggle with him) or it argueth a most strange inconsiderateness and vanity in presuming at so infinite a disadvantage, without any ground of confidence, without any hope of success, to oppose God's will and power. *Οὐ δυνάμεις, οὐ ἀνδρείου τοιοῦτο:* He is not long-lived, who fighteth with the immortals, old Homer could tell us; the same which the Prophet says; *Wo unto him that striveth with his maker.* Nothing indeed can be more reasonable, than that advice of the Preacher: *Contend not with him that is mightier than thou;* which in this case in effect is the same with this; Do not by sinning offend or provoke God.

3. Whence likewise the consideration of this point may dispose us to weigh our counsels, and thereupon not to adventure upon any unwarrantable resolution or design; there being so apparent reason to despair of success, an insuperable power, being always ready to obstruct and cross us in the carriage of such designs, with whatever cunning laid, or backed with whatever might; for hence those sayings in Scripture are manifestly verified: *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord:* and, *no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper;* and, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength, who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?*

4. It also likewise serveth to depress in us all confidence in our selves, and in all other things, as to any security in them, or succour from them: for all things in the world, though they conspire and combine together all their forces, will be altogether unable to support us, to assist us, to defend us against the divine power, or indeed without it; they being all, other-wise than as maintained by him, infinitely feeble and frail: *Though hand join in hand (that is, notwithstanding the conjunction of all powers whatever) the wicked shall not be unpunished,* saith the Wiseman: and, *I kill (saith God) and I make alive, I wound, and I heal; neither is there any thing that can deliver out of my hand;* and, *No King is saved by the multitude of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength; a horse is a vain thing for safety.*

5. It therefore also may be of a special efficacy to quell and mortifie in us the vices of pride, haughtiness, arrogance, self-will, stubbornness and contumacy; since contemplating the power of God we cannot but perceive our selves to be very pitiful, impotent and insignificant things: who without permission cannot effect any thing; who cannot expect in any case to have our will; who have continually curbs in our mouths, and manacles on our hands; so that we cannot say or do any thing, cannot so much as stir, or endeavour any thing, without check or control; being under a predominant force, *which always resisteth the proud:* under the power of him, who hath said, *the lofty looks*

looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; ^{II. 2. 11. 13. 11.} whose character and peculiar work it is to behold every one that is proud, and ^{24. 21. 10. 2.} to abase him; to cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and to lay low the ^{Job 40. 11, 12.} haughtiness of the terrible; to break the high arm, and to bring down the high ^{38. 15.} looks; and to stain the pride of all glory. Whence there is all the reason in the ^{Psal. 18. 27.} world, that we should obey St. Peter's injunction; to ^{Ila. 23. 9.} Humble our selves un- ^{I Pet. 5. 6.} der the mighty hand of God.

6. The consideration of God's omnipotence serveth to breed and nourish faith in God, as to the certain performance of his word and promises: for let the accomplishment of them be to appearance never so difficult or improbable, yet he is able to perform them, and will therefore do it. ^{I Sam. 15. 19.} The strength ^{Numb. 23. 19.} of Israel (as Samuel said) will not lie, nor repent: and, Hath he said it, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken it, and shall he not make good? said Balaam, inspiredly: and, The Lord of hosts (saith Esay) hath purposed it, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? and, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; I have spoken it, I will also ^{Ila. 46. 11.} bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it: and, My word that goeth ^{Ila. 55. 11.} out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; it shall prosper unto the thing whereunto I sent it: and, The ^{Psal. 33. 11, 8.} counsel of the Lord (saith the Psalmist) standeth for ever, the thoughts of his ^{Ila. 40. 8.} heart to all generations: Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast: and, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words ^{Mar. 13. 31.} shall not pass away. So doth God assert his immutable fidelity, and confi- ^{Job 23. 13.} dering his indefectible power doth assure us, that we may rely upon his ^{Prov. 19. 21.} word; and the doing so is very grateful, and acceptable to God; for it was that virtue, for which Abram is so highly commended, and so highly re- ^{Jer. 4. 28.} warded: He did not (saith St. Paul of him) stagger at the promise of God ^{Rom. 4. 20,} through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully per- ^{21.} suaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform: To do other- wise is very displeasing and offensive to God; for we do thereby either doubt of his veracity, so (as St. John saith) making him a liar; or we disbelieve ^{John 5. 10.} his power, and make him impotent in our conceit; which to do is high injury to God, and detestable sacrilege. Hence also,

7. Particularly this consideration may produce and cherish our faith in the sufficiency of God's providence, and may induce us entirely to rely upon it. For if God be omnipotent, then is he easily able to supply us in all our needs, to relieve us in all our straits, to protect us from all danger and mischief; and being able he will not fail to do it, since his goodness also disposeth him thereto, and his word engageth him; he having declared himself to be the patron, protector and benefactor of the needy; he having promised to help, ^{Psal. 145, 146.} relieve and comfort those who seek and cry unto him. Distrust in God's ^{147. &c.} providence is always grounded, either in the disbelief of God's goodness, or of his power; either supposing him to be unwilling, or unable to do us good; and that the former is commonly grounded on the latter, the Israelites constant behaviour in the wilderness (representing the ordinary conversation of men in this world) doth inform us; who conceived their needs greater, than that God was able to supply them; their enemies stronger, than that by God's assistance they could withstand, or subdue them; the obstacles to their proceedings such, that God himself could not carry them through them; for, as the Psalmist representeth their behaviour and discourse; They spake ^{Psal. 78. 19,} against God, saying, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold he smote ^{20.} the rock, that the water gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people? and, that from their conceit- ing God unable to convey them through all dangers and difficulties, to render them victorious over the tall men, and the fenced Cities of Canaan, they, notwithstanding God's presence with them, and ready aid, desponded in heart, and murmured, and provoked God; and in consequence of such misbehaviour forfeited obtaining the rest propounded to them, many passa- ^{Deut. 1. 28.} ges in the story do shew us. We in practice do commonly follow them, ^{Numb. 14. 9.} ^{Heb. 3. 18.} not.

notwithstanding the many experiments of God's wonderful power and goodness, frequently suspecting that God cannot supply our necessities, or satisfy our desires; whence we are either over-born with anxiety, and become disconsolate, or have recourse for succour and relief to other aids, deserting God, as the Prophet intimates, when he (withal declaring the offence God taketh at such miscarriages, with the guilt and mischief we thereby incur) pronounceth thus: *Curst be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord; for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, &c.* Whence our Saviour took it ill of his Disciples, and rebuked them, when even in the most imminent and affrighting dangers they gave place to fear or doubt; as when in a great tempest, the ship being even covered with waves, they being afraid, cried out, *Lord save us, we perish*; he said unto them, *τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* And when St. Peter, walking upon waves, and beginning to sink, his heart mis-giving, in like manner cried out, *Lord save me*; our Lord also reproves him with an *ὀλιγόπιστε τί ἔδισαυας; O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* whence we both learn, that it is our want or weakness of faith, which make us in our greatest needs ready to sink; and that it is not excusable for us in the extremity of danger to doubt of God's protection and succour.

Farther,

8. This consideration affordeth comfort and encouragement unto us, in the undertaking and prosecution of honest and prudent enterprises, giving us to hope confidently for success, how difficult or dangerous soever it appear unto us; all difficulties and improbabilities vanishing before that omnipotency which abetteth and backeth such endeavours; the which is by faith imparted and appropriated unto us; so that we (with St. Paul) are able to do all things by God strengthening us. Nothing is so high or difficult (if just and reasonable) which a resolute faith in the divine power cannot easily surmount and achieve: A word, seconded therewith, can transplant trees, and transfer mountains any whither: *If ye (saith our Lord) have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed: Ye may say to this sycamine tree, be thou plucked up by the roots, and be thou planted in the sea, and it shall obey you; ἡ ἐδὲ ἀδυνατοῦν ὑμῖν; and there is nothing (adds our Saviour) which shall be impossible unto you;* for, as he saith again, *All things are possible to him that believeth;* that is, unto him who relieth upon the divine power; for that the Faith he speaks of referreth thither, appeareth by several like passages in the Gospel; as for instance, in that where, to the blind men imploring his relief, our Lord puts this question: *Do ye believe that I can do this?* and they answering, *Yes Lord;* he thereupon replies, *According to your faith be it done unto you.* In contemplation of this power, we may, if our duty or good reason do call us forth, how small or weak soever in our selves, how destitute soever of defensive arms, or offensive weapons, naked and unarmed, with a sling and a stone, go out against the biggest and best armed Philistine, nothing doubtful of victory; it will be enough, if we can say with David, *I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hosts;* that is, confiding in his powerful help, as my invincible weapon and defence. But so much for this particular.

III. That notion of the word Almighty, which implieth God's being universal proprietary and possessor of all things, hath likewise many good uses; we shall only name them, without enlarging upon them: We thence learn,

1. That we our selves are not our own, and therefore ought to submit our selves with content and patience to God's disposal; for that (as it is in the Gospel) God may do what he pleaseth with his own. Whence also we are bound (as St. Paul enjoineth us) to glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are God's.

2. That also therefore we ought to be content with that portion of accommodations here which God alloweth us; for that since every thing is his, we can claim nothing to our selves; all we have doth proceed from mere liberality and bounty.

3. The

3. The same reason obligeth us to be satisfied, whenever providence withdraweth what it did afford us the enjoyment of; for God doth never so communicate any thing, as to devest himself of the paramount title and propriety therein: all things have an immutable relation to him as Lord, and cannot be alienated from him; whence he may justly, when he pleaseth, recal or resume them into his hand. Job 1. 21.

4. Yea hence we are obliged to be heartily thankful for all we ever have or enjoy; for that nothing is upon any account ours, or can be due to us from him; all proceeding from pure kindness and goodness.

5. We are hence obliged carefully to manage and employ all which is put into our hands, for his interest and service, as honest tenants and faithful stewards; making just returns and improvements; not embezzelling nor abusing any of his goods committed to us.

6. Lastly, we may learn hence to be humble and sober; not to be conceited, or elevated in mind, or apt to glory, in regard to any thing we have; since we have nothing that we can justly esteem, or properly call, our own.

IV. That sense, according to which the word doth signify God's containing all things by his immense presence, is also of most excellent use and influence upon our practice. We thereby may learn with what care and circumspection, with what reverence and modesty, with what innocence and integrity we ought always and in all places, to manage our conversation and behaviour; since we continually do think, and speak, and act in the immediate presence, and under the inspection of God; whose eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings; who searcheth and trieth our hearts, and possesseth our reins; who encompasseth our path, and is acquainted with all our ways; to whose eyes all things are naked and dissected; according to the significant and emphatical expressions of Scripture. Did we stand in the sight of our King, we should not dare to behave our selves rudely and indecently; were a virtuous person conscious of our doings, we should be ashamed to do any base or filthy thing; the oversight of a grave or a wise person would restrain us from practising vanities and impertinencies; how much more should the glorious Majesty of the most wise and holy God, being ever present to all our thoughts, words and actions, if duly considered and reflected upon, keep us within awe and compass? how can we, if we remember that we abide always in a temple sanctified by God's presence; not contain our selves in a careful and devout posture of soul? Job 34. 21. Jer. 17. 10. Psal. 139. 3. Heb. 4. 13. Psal. 90. 8. Prov. 20. 27. Πάντα ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἵσθαι τὸν ὄντι, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὁπίσθον αὐτοῦ λαμβάνοντες, καὶ χεῖρας αὐτοῦ. Clem. Alex. p. 510. vid. p. 517.

This consideration also prompteth us to frequent addresses of prayer, thanksgiving, and all kind of adoration toward God: for all reason dictateth it to be unseemly to be in his presence with our back turned unto him; without demonstrations of regard and reverence to him; without answering him when he speaketh to us; that is, without corresponding to the invitations, which he frequently by his providence maketh to us, of conversing with him, of seeking his favour, and imploring his help, and returning thanks for his mercies.

V. Lastly, the consideration that God doth uphold all things, and consequently our selves, in being, may upon several good accounts be influential upon our practice; particularly it may powerfully deter us from offending and displeasing him: for put case our life, our livelihood, all the conveniencies and comforts of our being should wholly depend upon the bounty and pleasure of any person, should we not be very wary and fearful to affront, or injure, or displease such a person? It is in the highest degree so with us in respect to God; and why are we so inconsiderate, that the same reason hath not the same effect upon us?

This consideration also should mind us how infinitely we are obliged to the goodness of God, who when he may by the bare withdrawing his conservative influence utterly destroy us, and suffer us to fall to nothing, doth notwithstanding our many provocations, the many neglects and injuries he receiveth from us, continually preserve us in his hand, and every moment imparteth a new being to us, for which, and all his infinite mercies and favours toward us, let us for ever yield unto him all thanks and praise. *Amen.*

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

SERMON XII.

ACTS IV. 24.

O Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea;
and all that in them is.

IT may be demanded, why besides that of *Almighty*, no other Attribute of God is expressed in our *Creed*? why for instance, the perfections of infinite *wisdom* and *goodness* are therein omitted? I answer,

1. That all such perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profess to believe, we consequently do ascribe them to him (implicitly.) For he that should profess to believe in God, not acknowledging those perfections, would be inconsistent and contradictory to himself. *Deum negaret* (as *Tertullian* speaks) *auferendo quod Dei est*. He would deny God, by withdrawing what belongs to God.

*Adv. Marc.
cap. 3.*

2. The title *πρωτογενής*, as implying God's universal providence in the preservation and government of the world, doth also involve or infer all divine perfections displayed therein; all that glorious majesty and excellency, for which he is with highest respect to be honoured and worshipped by us, which added to the name of God, doth determine what God we mean, such as doth in all perfection excel, and with it doth govern the world.

3. I may add *thirdly*, That the Doctrine of God's universal providence being not altogether so evident to natural light, as those attributes discovered in the making of the world (more having doubted thereof, and disputed against it with much more plausibility) it was therefore convenient to add it; as a matter of Faith clearly and fully (as we did shew) attested unto by divine Revelation. So much may suffice to remove such a scruple concerning the fulness and sufficiency of the *Creed* in that particular. I proceed:

MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

This clause is one of those, which was of later times inserted into the *Creed*; none of the most antient Expositours thereof (*Austin*, *Ruffin*, *Maximus Taurinensis*, *Chrysologus*, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, and other most antient Writers, in their Rules of Faith, exhibit their sense thereof, and the Confessions of all General Councils (the *Nicene*, and those after it) express it. And there is great reason for it; not only thereby to disavow and decry those prodigious errors of *Marcion*, *Manichaeus*, and other such *Hereticks*, which did then ascribe the creation of the world (or of some parts thereof, seeming to their fancy less good and perfect) to another God or Principle inferior in worth and goodness to that God which was revealed in the Gospel; or did opinionate two principles (not distinct only, but contrary one to the other) from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things were derived: But for that the creation of the world (which the holy

holy Confessors of Christ do here in the Text ascribe unto God) is that peculiarly august and admirable work, by which we learn that He is, and in good measure what He is; by which, I say, the existence of God is most strongly demonstrated; and in which his divine perfections are most conspicuously displayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and consequently the chief ground of all natural Religion; of our just subjection, our reasonable duty, our humble devotion toward him. The title, *Creator of heaven and earth*, is that also, which most especially characterizes and distinguishes the God whom we believe and adore from all false and fictitious Deities; for, as the Psalmist sings, *All the gods of the nations are but idols, but the Lord made the heavens*: and, *Thou (prayeth Hezekiah) art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth*: and, *The gods (saith the Prophet Jeremy) that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens*: and, *We preach unto you (saith St. Paul to the ignorant Lycaonians) that ye should turn from those vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth*. It is therefore a point, which worthily hath been inserted into all Creeds, and Confessions of our Faith, as a necessary object of our belief; and 'tis indeed a subject no less wholesome and fruitful, than high and noble; deserving that we employ our best thoughts and most careful attention upon it: to the commemoration thereof God consecrated the great Sabbatical Festivity among his ancient people; nor should even the consideration of the great works concerning our Redemption abolish the remembrance of it: to confer some advantage thereto, we shall now so discourse thereon, as first to propound some Observations explicative thereof, and conducing to our information about it, then to apply the consideration thereof to practice.

We may first observe, that the ancient Hebrews having, as it seems, in their Language no one Word properly signifying the *World*, or universal frame and complex of things created (that *Systeme*, as the Author *de Mundo* defines it, consisting of heaven and earth, and the natures contained in them) did, for to express it, use a collection of its chief parts (chief absolutely in themselves, or such in respect to us) the *heaven*, and the *earth*, adding sometimes, because of the word *earth* its ambiguity, the *sea* also; yea sometimes, for fuller explication, subjoining to *heaven* its *host*, to *earth* its *fulness*, to the *sea* its *contents*. So, *In six days the Lord made heaven and earth*, saith Moses: and, *Do not I fill heaven and earth*, saith the Lord? (in Jeremy:) and, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail*, saith our Saviour: and, God, saith St. Paul, *who made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth (where the World, and all things therein, do signify the same with heaven and earth; he first uses the word (world) which the Greek language afforded, then adds the circumlocution, whereby the Hebrews did express it.)* By heaven and earth therefore we are, I say, to understand those two regions superiour and inferiour, into which the whole systeme of things is divided, together with all the beings that do reside in them, or do belong unto them, or are comprehended by them; as we see fully expressed in our Text, and otherwhere; particularly with utmost distinction by the Angel in the *Apocalypse*, who sweares by him that liveth for ever, *who created the heaven, and the things that are therein; and the earth with the things that therein are, and the sea with the things therein*.

By *heaven* then is understood all the superiour Region encompassing the Globe of earth, and from it on all sides extended to a distance unconceivably vast and spacious, with all its parts and furniture, and inhabitants; not only such things in it as are visible and material, but also those which are immaterial and invisible: so we are plainly taught by St. Paul: *By him (saith he) were created all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both those that are visible, and those that are invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him; that is, not only the material and sensible parts, or contents of heaven (those bright and beautiful lamps exposed to our view, with the fluid matter in which they may*

- be conceived to float or swim) but those Beings of a more pure and refined substance, and thence indiscernible to our sense, however eminent in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity, whose ordinary residence and *proper habitation* (their *θῆσις οὐρανός*, as St. Jude termeth it) is in those superiour Regions; in that they are Courtiers and domestick Officers of God (whose throne and special presence, or the place where he more peculiarly and amply discovereth himself, and displayeth his glory, is in heaven) attending upon him, and ministering to him; *encircling his throne* (as it is in the *Revelation*) and *always* (as our Saviour telleth us) *beholding his face*; Even these all were made by God: The time indeed when, and the manner how those invifible sublime creatures were made, is not in the history of the Creation, or elsewhere, manifestly expressed (because perhaps it doth exceed the capacity, or doth not fute the condition of man to understand them; or because it doth not much concern us, or not much conduceth to our edification to know them) but that they were made by God, and that when we call God the *maker of heaven*, they are comprehended, as the creatures of God dwelling there, is evidently declared in Scripture: for beside the forementioned clear and full place of St. Paul, the Angel forecited in the *Revelation* saith, that God *created the heaven, &c. & the things in it*; and in our Text it is said, that God *made heaven and all things in it* (*ποίησεν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ*) which plainly includeth the Angels; if all things in it, then surely the Angels, who are often expressed to be in heaven, being indeed the principal and most considerable things therein. And, *Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host* (pray the Levites in *Nehemiah*) where according to the Jews notion, who say there are three heavens; *Cælum nubiferum*, or the Firmament; *Cælum astriferum*, the (starry) Heavens; *Cælum angeliferum*, or the Heaven of Heavens, where the Angels reside (the third heaven in St. Paul;) by the hosts of heaven, are meant the Angels; as also the hosts of God do seem to signify in the 103. Psalm, where 'tis said, *Bless the Lord ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, bearkening unto the voice of his word; Bless ye the Lord all his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure*. Whence they are termed the *sons of God*; as where in Job 'tis said, *There was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord*; and in several other places: And St. Jude telleth us of the laps'd Angels, that they did not retain *τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀρχῆς*, their beginning, or primitive State; wherefore they had a beginning, and whence could they have that, but from God, who alone is eternal; *who alone* originally, intrinsically and necessarily *hath*, as St. Paul saith, *immortality*; and consequently alone [as Aristotle by several arguments proveth against Plato] *hath eternity*. The Angels also are subject to God's jurisdiction and governance, which argueth their proceeding from him, and dependance upon him. In fine the Psalmist reckons them among the works of God; for having said, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels*; and, *Bless the Lord all ye his hosts*; he recapitulating and concluding subjoins, *Bless the Lord all his works in all places of his dominions*; and again, in the 148. Psalm, summoning all the creation to a consort of doxology, he begins with the heavens, then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts and inhabitants belonging to each; and in the first place mentioning the angels, then the stars, then the heaven of heavens; he subjoineth the reason why they ought all to praise God: *Let them* (saith he) *praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded, and they were created; he hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree, which shall not pass*. Thus we are by divine revelation instructed concerning the existence and original of those heavenly invifible beings, to the knowledge of whom, that they are, what they are, whence they are, natural light could not reach; although from the reliques of primitive Tradition even the Pagans themselves commonly in part did acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferiour or secondary Gods, whom they conceived to converse together happily (*ἐν τῇ ἀνυστάσει τῶν θεῶν*) in the highest place above (as Aristotle saith) in subjection to God, and attendance on him, the
- Jude 6.
- Heb. 1. 14.
Dan. 7. 10.
Psal. 103. 21.
Rev. 5. 11.
Matt. 18. 10.
- The Greek Fathers commonly (and St. Hierom after them) conceived they were made before the creation of this material world: St. Austin thinks them meant under Fiat lux. De Civ. D. 11. 9.
- Δὶς τὸ τοῖς ἀγγέλους ἔτι καὶ πρὶν τοῦ γένεσθαι ἀνθρώπων. Basil. Hexem. 1.
- ὅτι διὸς τὸ πρῶτον φῶς ἐκ τῆς πνεύματος. Noz. Orat. 43.
- Apoc. 10. 6.
- Marc. 12. 25.
13. 32, &c.
- Neh. 9. 6.
- 2 Cor. 12.
- Psal. 103. 20, 21.
- Job 2. 1. 38. 7.
Psal. 89. 6. 29. 1.
- Jude 6.
- 1 Tim. 5. 16.
- Arist. de Caelo, 1. cap. ult.
- Psal. 103. 20, &c.
- Arist. de Caelo, 1. 3.
Polit. 1. 1.

the children of the Supreme God. *Plato* calls God *Πατρις ὁ Δημιουργός*, the *Plato in Tim.* *Father and framer* of them all, according (as he avoweth himself) to ancient Tradition. And thus concerning those Beings piety doth oblige us to believe and profess that God is their maker, it especially conducing to his glory to believe, that he is the authour of their sublime natures, and donour of those excellent properties, with which they are endowed, and wherein they so far surpass all other Beings.

As for all other things both in heaven and earth, the material frame of the visible world, with all its parts compacted together in so fair, so fit, so firm and stable an order, they (as we have sometime sufficiently discoursed) even to natural understanding speak themselves to have been produced by a most wise, most powerful, most beneficent authour, that is, by God; the which is confirmed by innumerable testimonies of holy Writ, so evident and obvious, that we need not to cite them; and to thus much the generality of mankind hath always consented; as also the most and best reputed Philosophers did in general terms avow it, acknowledging God the authour and builder of the World.

But there is one particular, wherein they seem unanimously to have differed from what Christian piety inclines us to acknowledge, as most suitable to the divine perfection and Majesty; which concerns the origine of that *matter*, of which corporeal things do subsist. For even *Plato* himself, who so positively doth assert the world to have been framed by God, is yet conceived (I speak so dubiously, because his writings about this point are somewhat obscure, and as *Justin Martyr* proves, inconsistent with themselves, to suppose the matter of things to be eternal; he ascribing only to God the forming and disposing it into

Tim. p. 1058.
 Just. Mart.
 Cohort. 1. ad
 Grac. p. 8.

a good order, answerable to some patterns pre-existent in his wife understanding; even as a good Artist doth out of an unshapen lump of stuff frame a handsome piece of work, conformable to some *Idea* or image) pre-conceived in his fancy: so that he represents God rather as a builder out of prepared materials, than as a Creatour of the World: *Socrates* and *Plato* (saith * *Plutarch*) did suppose three principles of things, God, Matter, *Idea*: God is the mind; Matter the first subject of generation and corruption; *Idea* an incorporeal subsistence in the conceptions of God. *Anaxagoras* also, as the same Author (and *Aristotle* before him) telleth us, did assert two Principles; the one passive, the matter consisting of an infinite number of small particles like to one another in shape; the other active, understanding, which ranged those troops of little bodies into order: To the same effect *Pythagoras* his conceits, though expressed with much obscurity, are reduced. *Thales* his opinion was in effect the same, who (as *Cicero* telleth us) said, that water was the principle of things, and God that mind, which fashioned all things out of water. * The *Stoicks* also were of the same opinion: It seems to them (saith *Laertius* in *Zeno's* Life) that there are two principles of all things, the agent and the patient; that the patient is the matter void of qualities, but the agent, reason which is therein, that is God. † *Tertullian* against *Hermogenes* saith, that he did take from the *Stoicks* to place matter with God; which matter did always exist, being neither born nor made, and no-wise having either beginning or end, out of which afterward the Lord made all things: And || Come now (saith the same Father in his Book against the *Valentinians*) let the *Pythagoreans* learn, let the *Stoicks* acknowledge, and even *Plato* himself, whence matter, which they would have unmade, did draw its both origine and substance toward all this structure of the world. Yea *Aristotle* tells us, that generally all natural Philosophers before him did assume it for a principle, that nothing was made out of every thing produced had necessarily some pre-existent matt

Ut igitur faber, cum quid adificaturus est, non ipse facit materiam, sed ea utitur, qua sit parata, sistorque item cerâ; sic isti providentia divina materiam præstare esse oportuit, non quam ipse faceret, sed quam haberet paratam.
Cic.

*Quibus oculis intueri potuit vester
Plato fabricam illam tanti operis ; quâ
construi à Deo atque adificari mundum
facit ? Cic. de N. D. &c.*

* Plut. de placitis. 1. 3.

Ἀναξάνορος τε δ' ἰμχανῇ χρεῖται
τῷ νῷ τοῦς κοσμοποίται. Arist. Met.
I. 4.

Thales aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem esse mentem, qua ex aqua cuncta fingeret. De N. D. 1.

* Δοκεί δ' αὐτοῖς ἀρχαίς ἰδ' ἥν ὅλων
 δύο τὰ ποιῶν τὴν πάσων τὸ μὴ ἐν
 πάσων ἰδ' ἐν αὐτοῖς ὅλων τὸ δ' ποιῶν
 τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ λόγον τὸ δεῖν. Laert. in Zen.
 Lips. in Phys. Sen. Ep. 65.

† *Sumpsit à Stoicis materiam cum Domino ponere, qua & ipsa semper fuerit neque nata, neque facta, nec initium habens omnino, nec finem, ex quo Dominus omnia posse fecerit. Tertul. in Herm. 1.*

Il 4^{to} munc discant Pythagorici, ag-
noscant Stoici, Plato ipse, unde mate-
ria, quam innatam volunt, & origi-
nem & substantiam traxerit in omnem
hanc struem mundi. Adv. Valent. 15.
Vid. Athenag. *leg.* pag. 19.

Ἀλλ' ἔτι τι ὁ ἀποκρίνεται, ἐξ ὧ γίνεσθαι
τὸ γινώσκον, οἷον τὰ οὐτὰ, καὶ τὰ
ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος. Phyl. i. 8.
*Erūt aliquid quod aut ex nihilo orta-
tur, aut in nihilum subito occidat; quid
hoc Physicus dixit unquam? Cic. de
Divin. 2.*

Ἀδύνατον
τῷ ἀνθρώ-
πινῳ φύσει
τῷ τῷ θεῷ
δημιουργίαν
περιεργάζε-
σθαι. Chryf.
in Gen. λογ.
6.

Ἡμεῖς βαλεῖν οὐκ ἔοικεν μέτρον. Chryf.
— hoc est, modum conditionis suae
transgredi, nec intelligere quousque ho-
mini licent accedere. Lact.

can no-wise reach the extent of all powers, and all possibilities; and that we much (as *St. Chrysostome* speaks) do transgress our measures and bounds, if we pretend to know what things God is able to produce, or how he doth produce any: *His works* (as *Lactantius* speaketh) *are seen with eyes, but how he made them, the mind it self cannot see.*

Those

Those opinions therefore of the ancient Philosophers, that the matter of the world (or of natural things) was eternal and necessarily pre-existent, and that there could be no creation out of nothing, were assumed altogether without any clear or sure foundation. We may say unto them, as our Lord did once say to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Matt. 22. 29. *The poverty and narrowness of man's natural understanding* (not going usually beyond matters obvious to sense) *and their inability by the meanness of their reason to look up to the height of truth, did* (as St. Basil says) *deceive them.* And that these opinions (revived and embraced by divers persons in our days) are false, and contrary to our Faith, that in truth all the matter of things both could be, and really was created by God, may from several reasons appear :

Ἐξαιτίας αὐτῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων φύσεως ἢ πενίας—ἢ ὀφρύνοντες διὰ λογισμῶν ταπεινότητάς τοις ὑψίστοις ἀπιδεῖν τὴν ἀληθείαν. Bas. hexam. hom. 6.

1. It is often in general terms affirmed in Scripture, that God did make all things; all things in heaven and earth. Now it is unsafe, and never without urgent reason allowable, to make limitations or restrictions of universal propositions, especially of such as are frequently and constantly thus set down: And, like as St. Paul somewhere discourses; because it is said in the Prophets, *Every one that believeth in him, shall not be ashamed;* and, *whosoever shall call upon the Lord, shall be saved;* therefore both Jews and Greeks, in case of their belief and invocation of God, are capable of acceptance and salvation; *ἐπεὶ ὅτι διασώθη*, for that there is no distinction or exception made: So it being said universally, and unlimitedly, that all things were made, and no reason appearing which compels to restrain that universality, therefore the matter of things was also made; the matter being one thing, yea in the opinion of most Philosophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only substantial thing in nature; all other things being only modes, affections or relations thereof. Whence Aristotle telleth us, that most of the first Philosophers did affirm nothing at all really to be made, and nothing ever to be destroyed; because matter did always subsist and abide the same, as if no other thing beside in nature had any being considerable. If God therefore did not produce matter it self, he could hardly be accounted author of any thing in nature, so far would he be from being truly affirmed the maker of all things: Upon this ground Cicero (as Lactantius cites him) denied that God was the Authour of any of the Elements: *It is not probable,* said he, *that the matter, whence all things did arise, was made by divine Providence;* and, *if matter was not made by God, then neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire were made by him;* to invert which discourse, we say, that God did make all these things (*Earth, Sea, Fire, and Air*) as the Holy Scripture frequently asserts, wherefore the matter of them was also his work: he was not only (as St. Basil speaks) *an inventour of figures* (or a raiser of motions) *but the maker of nature it self,* and of all that is substantial therein.

Rom. 10. 11, &c.

Arist. Phys. 1. 8. Metaph. 1. 3.

Primum igitur non est probabile eam materiam rerum unde orta sunt omnia, esse divina Providentia effectam, sed habere & habuisse vim, & naturam suam: —Quod si non est à Deo materia facta, ne terra quidem, & aqua, & aer, & ignis à Deo factus est. Cic. apud Lactant. 2. pag. 150.

Ὁ θεός—ἐξ ἡμετέρας καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῃ, ἀλλ' αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως ἧς ὄντων δημιουργός. Bas. hex. 6.

2. Again, God is in scripture affirmed to be the true proprietary, and possessor of all things, none excepted; how so, if he did not make them? for *He that did not make, cannot* (as J. Martyr argues) *have any right to that which is not made.* It is the argument, by which the Scripture frequently proves God to be the owner and disposer of things, because he made them: *The earth* (saith the Psalmist) *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein;* for he hath founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods. So, because (we may say) he did produce matter, and doth sustain its being; therefore he (by the most excellent sort, and upon the best ground of right) doth own it, and may justly use it at his pleasure; otherwise might we not say with Tertullian? *If God did not make matter, he useth a thing not his own, because not made by him, either he useth it precariously as needing it, or injuriously, as usurping upon it by force.*

Τὸ ὅτι μὴ προσηκούσιν ἰδιαιτὰ ἐξουσία τοῖς τοῖς καὶ γεγορῶς. Just. M. Cohort. ad Gr. 1. p. 22.

Psal. 24. 1. Gen. 14. 19. Deut. 10. 14.

—de alieno usus aut precario usus est, quod egeni ejus, aut injuria, quod prevalenti ejus. Tert. adv. Hermog. 9.

3. The

3. The supposing any thing to be eternal, uncreated, and independent upon God doth advance that Being in those respects unto an equality with God, imparting thereto so great and divine Attributes: It will become (as St. Basil saith) God's peer, or equal in dignity, being dignified with the same privileges. That supposition likewise in effect depriveth God of those special perfections, Independency, and All-sufficiency; making him in his operations, and performances to depend upon; and to be in a manner subject unto

Nemo non eget eo, re cuius utitur; nemo non subicitur ei, cuius eget ut possit uti; Et nemo qui praeferat de suo uti, non in hoc superior est eo, cui praeferat uti. Tert. adv. Herm. 4, 5.

Quantum Deus possit; materiam ipse sibi formet; an data utatur; utrum idea materia prius superveniat, an materia idea; Deus quicquid vult efficiat, an in multis rebus illum tractanda destituant; Et à magno artifice praeferantur multa, non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo exercetur saepe inobsequens arti est. Sen. pref. Nat. Qu.

matter; to need its concurrence; and to be unable to perform any thing farther than it admits: for, None (as Tertullian discourseth) is free from needing that, whose stock he useth; none is exempt from subjection to that, which he needs that he may use; and none, who lends of his own to use, is not in this superiour to him, to whom he lends it for use: the very doubting about this made Seneca put such absurd, and impious questions, as these: How God's power is limited; whether he effects whatever he pleaseth, or is disappointed by want of matter; whether he doth not form many things ill, not from defect of art in himself, but from disobedience of the subject-matter: which questions we easily resolve by saying, Nothing is impossible to God; his will

can never be crossed, or disappointed; he can never do any thing bad, or imperfect in its kind; because he createth matter it self, answerable to his design.

4. As Aristotle well discoursed against the ancient Philosophers, who before Anaxagoras did assign but one Principle of things, a material and passive one, as if no active principle were required; so may we argue against him, and them together. If God did produce, and insert an active principle into nature (as who can imagine those admirable works of nature, the seminal propagation, and nutrition of plants, and however more especially the generation, motion, sense, fancy, appetite, passion of animals to be accomplished by a mere passive agitation of matter, without some active principle distinct from matter, which disposeth, and determineth it to the production of such effects?) if God could, I say, produce, and insert such an active Principle (such an *ἐντελέχεια*, as the Philosopher calleth it,) why might he not as well produce a passive one, such as the matter is? what greater difficulty could he find in doing it?

5. Yea farther, If God hath produced immaterial beings, or simple, and uncompounded substances distinct from matter, such as Angels, and the souls of men, merely out of nothing (for out of what pre-existent stuff could they be made?) then may he as well create matter out of nothing; for what greater difficulty can we conceive in creating so much lower, and more imperfect a thing, than in creating those more excellent substances, so much fuller as it were of entity, or so far more removed from nothing? If any one thing is producible out of nothing, why may not all things capable of

Cur non omnia ex nihilo, si aliquid ex nihilo; nisi si insufficientis fuit divina virtus omnibus producendis, quae aliquid protulerit ex nihilo? Tertull. adv. Herm. 15.

existence be so produced by a competent, and omnipotent virtue? Why not (as Tertullian argued) all things out of nothing, if any thing out of nothing; except if the divine virtue, which drew somewhat out of nothing, was insufficient to produce all things thence? But that such immaterial substances were produced by God, we before from many

plain testimonies of divine revelation did shew; and particularly the souls of men are produced from God's breath, or by the efficacy of his word.

Plal. 33. 9. 148. 5.

6. The manner of God's making the world express'd in Scripture, by mere will and command, (*He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast; he commanded, and they were created*) that only by uttering the word fiat (not audibly, but mentally, that is by an act of volition) all things should be formed and constituted in their specific natures and perfections, doth argue, that matter, or any other thing possible, might easily by the divine power be produced out of nothing. Likewise effecting miracles superiour, or contrary to the law and course of nature, without any preparatory

ry dispositions induced into the fuscipient matter, in the same manner, by mere willing, saying, or commanding, whereof there be in the Scripture frequent instances, doth persuade the same; *Θέλω, καὶ γένηται, I will, be thou* Luke 5. 13. *cleansed: Woman, great is thy faith, γυνὴ μεγάλη σου πίστις, be it to thee, as* Matt. 15. 28. *thou desirest: ναύκληρε, σοὶ λέγω ἐγείρεαι, young man, I say to thee, Wake, from* Luke 7. 14. *the sleep of death; So did our Saviour speak, and the effect immediately followed; whereby as he demonstrated his divine power; so he declared the manner whereby divine power doth incomprehensibly operate in the production of things; and that it therein no-wise dependeth upon matter: for it is no-wise harder, or more impossible to produce matter it self, than to produce a form therein without, or against an aptitude to receive it: nay it seemeth more difficult to raise children unto Abraham out of stones, than to* Matt. 3. 9. *draw them out of nothing; there, being a positive obstacle to be removed; here, no apparent resistance; there, as well somewhat preceding to be destroyed, as somewhat new to be produced; here, only somewhat simply to be produced: especially considering, as we said, that God useth no other means, instruments or applications in these productions, than his bare word or command; which there is no reason, why we should not conceive as able immediately to make the matter, as to produce the forms of things.*

7. Lastly, The Holy Text, describing the manner and order of the creation, doth insinuate this truth. *The Scripture (saith Tertullian well) doth first pronounce the earth to be made, then setteth out its quality; as likewise first professing the heaven made; it in the sequel doth superinduce its disposition. In the beginning (saith Moses) God made heaven and earth; now the earth was without form; that is, it seems, God at first did make the matter of heaven and earth devoid of all form and order, a confused and unshapen mass; then he digested, and distinguished the parts of them, by several steps orderly raising thence all those various kinds, and well arrayed hosts of goodly creatures: First he made the stones and timber, and all requisite materials, then did he rear and frame this stately fabrick; So the words do sound, and may well be understood.*

From these Premises we may conclude, against those Philosophers, who destitute of the light of revelation did conceit otherwise, and against those Christians, who have followed the Philosophers (as *Hermogenes* of old, and *Vulkelius* of late, together with the Sectatours of their opinions) that God did create (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word, did create) that is, either immediately, or mediately did produce out of nothing, or did bestow entirely a new existence unto every thing, which is, not excepting any one; and that is the sense of the words, having *Made heaven and earth*; or of the Title, *Maker of heaven and earth* ascribed unto God.

Which Title, as all sober Christians have always acknowledged, and the holy Oracles do most plainly avouch due to the one true God alone (for, *To 1 Cor. 8. 6. as there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things*) so there were divers Hereticks of old, *Marcion* and others of the *Gnostick* crew, who contradicted it; affirming that the God of the Old Testament, who made the world, and enacted the ancient Law, whom *Moses* and the *Prophets* did declare, was not the same God with him, from whom the Gospel proceeded, and who preached therein; the *Mosaick* God being a worse condition'd God, fierce and rigid, angry and implacable, delighting in wars and mischiefs; but the *Evangeli- cal* God, the Father of our Lord, being mild and gentle; void of all wrath and spleen; very indulgent and beneficent: Of kin to that fancy of *Marcion* was the error of the *Manichees*; who supposed two first causes of things; from one whereof good, from the other evil did fatally proceed; which conceit it seems they drew from the *Per- sian, Egyptian, or other Ethnical Doctrines*; the which we

Scriptura terram primò factam edicit, dehinc qualitatem ipsius edisserit; sicut & calum primò factam professa dehinc dispositionem ejus superinducit. Tertull. contra Hermog. 26.

Τὴν ὕλην πρῶτος ἔσας εἰδοποιήσαν ὕμνον, ἐκαστὸν τὰ ἐξ αὐτῆς σχήματα, καὶ με- γέθος πεποιθὲς. Greg. Naz. Or. 43.

Prædicat hic duos esse Patres, divisæque regna: Esse mali causam Dominum, qui condidit orbem; Quique figuravit carnem spiramine vi- vam; Quique dedit legem, & vatum qui voce locutus; Hunc negat esse bonum, justum tamen esse fatetur, Crudelem, durum, belli cui sava volup- tas, Judicio horrendum, precibus mansuoscere nullis: Esse alium suadens, nulli qui cognitus un- quam; Hunc ait esse bonum, nullum qui judicat aequè, Sed spargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli. Adv. Marc. Poem. 1. have

Plut. de Iside, & Osiride.
 Aug. de Civ. Dei. XX. V. cum Lud.
 Vive.
 Lærtius in proemio.
 Plato de Leg. X.
 Eusebius de Prep. 14.
 Arist. Metaph. IV. I.
 Simplic. in Epict.

Εἰ γὰρ ἔστιν ἀναρχία τίς ποτε γένε-
 ται, ἀρχὴν δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτὴν
 ὁμοῦ, δὲ γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν
 ὁμοῦ ἀρχὴν, καὶ καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν, &c.
 Plut. de Is. & Osir.

have recited by Plutarch in his discourse about Isis, and Osiris: The Persian Magi (said he) had their Ormazdes, and Arimanius; the Egyptians their Osiris, and Typhon; the Chaldeans their good, and bad Planets; the Greeks their Zeus, and Hades; the Pythagoreans their Monas, and Dyas; Empedocles his concord and discord, &c. the like report we have in divers other Writers: The common reason, or ground upon which these erroneous conceits were built, was this; there appearing to be in nature some things im-

perfect, and some things bad (as ill dispositions, inclinations and passions of mind, ill tempers and diseases of body, attended with pains and troubles in life; vices, discords, deformities, antipathies, irregularities, monsters, poisons, and the like things dispersed in nature) this sort of things, they supposed could not proceed from perfect goodness, the fountain of what was good, lovely, orderly, convenient, pleasant and desirable: If (discourseth Plutarch, expressing the main of their argument) nothing can naturally arise without a cause, and good cannot afford causality to evil, it is necessary that nature should have a proper seed and principle of evil as well as good; and thus it seems to the most and wisest, for they indeed conceive two Gods as it were counterplotting each other; one the contri-

ver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better One God, the other Damon. But this discourse hath two faulty suppositions: It supposeth some things to be imperfect and evil, which are not truly such; and, to those things, which are truly such, it assigneth an imaginary and wrong cause:

i. It supposeth some Beings according to their original nature and constitution to be evil and imperfect; which supposition is, I say, false; for there is no sort of creature, which did not at first pass the divine approbation: God saw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good: Good, that is, convenient and suitable to its design (or its Author's Idea) fair and decent in its place, according to its proportion; very good, that is, perfect and complete in its degree, without any defect, blemish or flaw; not liable to any reasonable blame or exception. There are indeed among the creatures some degrees of perfection (it was fit there should be so in great variety, that things might by comparison illustrate and commend one another; that there might be regular subordinations, and subserviencies, and harmonies; that several faculties of intelligent creatures might be ex-

Natura omnes quoniam sunt, & ideo
 habent modum suum, speciem suam, &
 quandam secum pacem suam, profecto
 bona sunt. Aug. de Civ. D. XII.

ercised, and improved, and delighted; that the πολυτροπία σοφία, the manifold or multiform Wisdom of the Creatour might be displayed, acknowledged and celebrated; there are, I say, for such purposes in nature creatures gradually different in excellency) whence some things may be said comparatively imperfect, or rather less excellent and noble in respect to other things, endued with higher faculties, or (as they be sometimes called) perfections of nature; some things are less active, and more passive than others; are not so capable of enjoyments delectable unto, and more subject to impressions distastful to their particular nature; which passivities and displeasures are not simply evils, because they do sute the degree of the particular natures of those subjects, being also ever over-balanced with other pleasing activities and enjoyments: so have things different measures of excellency, but nothing as it comes from God's hand, or stands in its rank in nature, is positively imperfect, or void of that perfection, which is due to its kind; much less is any creature absolutely bad, that is ugly, or noxious, or troublesome, or cumbersome to the Universe; so that it were better away out of it, than in it. God (saith the Hebrew Wise-man) created all things, that they might have their being, and the generations of the world were healthful, and there is no poison of destruction in them. Every thing contributes somewhat to the use and benefit, or to the beauty and ornament of the whole: No weed grows out of the earth, no insect creeps upon the ground which hath not its elegancy, and yields

yields not its profit; nothing is abominable, or despicable, though all things are not alike amiable and admirable; there is therefore nothing in all the compass of nature unfit, or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which he becomingly, without derogation to his excellencies, may not own for his work; nothing which in its rank and degree doth not confer to the manifestation of his glorious power, admirable wisdom, and excellent goodness: O Lord (cried the devout Psalmist upon particular survey, and consideration of them) *how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches!* That which we call *poison*, is such only relatively, being noxious or destructive to one part, but innocent, wholesome and useful to some other part; and never prejudicial to the whole body of things: yea even to that part it self it is commonly beneficial in some case or season; affording, if not continual alimony, yet sometime physick thereto, and serving to expel another poison, or mischief more imminently dangerous. That which we call a *monster*, is not unnatural in regard to the whole contexture of causes, but arises no less methodically, than any thing most ordinary; and it also hath its good end and use, well serving to illustrate the beauty and convenience of nature's usual course. As for pain and grief incident to the natures of things, without regard to any demerit or justice, they are not properly evils, but adherencies to the less perfect natures of things; in a state liable to which God not only justly, but wisely, according to his pleasure might constitute things for the reasons and ends before insinuated; for no reason obliged him to confer upon every thing extreme perfection; he might dispense his liberalities in what kind and measure he thought good. In fine, the reason of offence we take at any thing of this kind, seeming bad or ugly to us, arises from our defect of knowledge and sagacity, we not being able to discern the particular tendency of each thing to the common utility and benefit of the world.

2. But as for those real imperfections and evils truly so called (*which alone, as St. Basil speaketh, are properly evil, and most worthy of the appellation of evils*) habitual distempers of soul, and irregular actions; errors, and vices, and sins, we need not search for any one eternal, or primitive cause of them: Although order, uniformity, beauty and perfection do, yet disorder, confusion, deformity and defect do not argue any unity of cause, whence they should spring; the true causes of them are sufficiently notorious; not the will, or power of a Creatour, but the wilfulness and impotency of creatures are the fountains of them. They are no substantial beings, and so do not need an infinite power to create them, they do hardly need a positive cause; being themselves rather defects, than effects; privations of being, than positive beings: *Let no man* (saith St. Austin) *seek an efficient cause of a bad will; for there is no efficient, but a deficient thereof; for that it self is not an effect, but a defection: and, An evil will* (saith he again) *is the efficient cause of an ill work; an evil will hath no cause; that is, none beside it self, or its own deficiency. And again: Evil hath no nature, but the loss of good hath received the name of evil; however most certainly the rise and root of sin is our free will and choice; it is* *καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθερίας* (as Cyrill. Hier. saith) *a bad spring from our choice. Men, or other intellectual and free agents their voluntarily averting themselves from the supreme true good to inferior appearing goods; their wilfully declining from the way which God doth shew and prescribe to them; their rejecting the advices, and disobeying the laws of God; their thwarting the dictates of that reason which God did put in them; their abusing their natural faculties; their perverting*

Ἐστὶ τὸ τίς τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τῶν παρὰ φύσιν δ' ἵππων, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ παρὰ γὰρ τὴν δόξιν, καὶ τὸν εἶδος ἀνάγκη εἶδεν γίνεσθαι παρὰ φύσιν. Arist. de Gen. Anim. 4.

Τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ δημιουργίας, ὡς πρὸς τινες ἐπὶ μὲν καὶ ἀναγκαῖαι φύσεις. Max. Tyr. XXV.

Divina nos admonet providentia non res insipienter vituperare, sed utilitatem rerum diligenter inquirere, Et ubi nostrum ingenium vel infirmitas deficit, ibi credere occulta, &c. atque hac ipsa aut humilitatis exercitatio est, aut elationis attritio. Aug. de Civ. Dei II. 22.

Τὰ κακά, κακὰ, ἀπὸς μάστιγα εἰσὶ τῆς τῶν κακῶν προσηγορίας ἀξία. Bal. in Orat. Quid Deus non est author mali.

Peccatum a Deo non est, quia nec est. Lips.

Nemo quarat efficientem causam male voluntatis, non enim est efficiens, sed deficiens; quia nec illa effectio est, sed defectio.

Mala voluntas efficiens est operis mali, mala autem voluntatis efficiens est nihil. Aug. de Civ. D. XII. 6, 7.

Mali nulla natura est, sed amissio boni mali nomen accepit. Aug. de C.D. XI. 9.

Ἀρχὴ καὶ ῥίζα τῆς ἀμαρτίας τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ αὐτεξέστω. Bal. ubi supr.

Deut. 4. 16. and corrupting themselves, and others also, by ill example, persuasion, allure-
 31. 29. ment, violence; these causes of such evils are most visible and palpable: we
 Gen. 6. 11. need not go far, nor arise to the top of things to find an authour, upon whom
 Exod. 32. 7, we may charge our evils; they are most truly called our *ways*, our *works*,
 &c. our *imaginations*, our *inventions* and *devices*; they are the

Τὴν μοχθηρίαν ἢ τὴν ψυχῆς ἐξουσία
 κυρίως τὴν τελεσφορίαν. Max. Tyr.
 XXV.

Αἰτία ἐλομένη· θεὸς ἀναίτιος. Plato
 de Rep. X.

Ὅτι γὰρ ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ Διὸς, καὶ ἐξ
 ἑαυτοῦ. Max. Tyr.

ful Cacodæmon, any eternal Fate to father them upon.

The mischiefs also of pain and grief consequent upon those distempers
 and misdemeanours (*that unwilling brood of wilful evils*, as Damascene calls
 them) have very discernible originals: they are partly to be imputed to us,
 and partly attributed to God: We by our faults deserve, and draw them to
 our selves; God in justice and wisdom doth inflict them on us: *Perditio tua*
ex te; O, *Israel*, *thou hast destroyed thy self*; and, *Wo unto their soul, for they*
have rewarded evil unto themselves; so doth God charge the cause of such
 evils upon us; and, *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not*
done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the most high? I am the Lord,
and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace,
and create evil; so God assumes the causality of them to himself. We need
 therefore not to enquire after any other cause of these evils (*mala pœna*) so
 called because they are displeasing to sense or fancy; although considering
 the needfulness, and usefulness of them in respect to publick benefit (as
 they are exemplary and monitive) and their wholesomeness for particular
 correction and cure (for, *No chastening*, as the *Apostle* saith, *for the present*
seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peace-
able fruit of righteousness unto them, which are exercised thereby) in such re-
 spects they may rather be called good things; however as they have any
 thing bad in them, they proceed from us, as they contain somewhat good,
 they are from God; which sufficiently confuteth those Heretical opiniators,
 and decideth the controversie; it being vain to suppose any other, beside
 these most apparent causes of such evils; Our bad desert, and God's just
 Providence. * It is considerable, that even vice (although

* Γίνεται καὶ ἡ κακία πρὸς τὴν
 τῆς φύσεως νόμον, καὶ ἡ ἀρετή πρὸς
 τὰ ἔλλα. Chryl. apud Phil. de Stoic.
 contr. 31. 32. Sen. Qu. Nat. pref.
 Et de Benef. 21. & Epist. 65.

objects of the Creation.

I shall next touch a consideration or two concerning the manner how,
 and the reason why God did make the world; which will commend to us
 his doing it, and intimate some grounds of duty, and both direct and ex-
 cite our practice in respect thereto: The manner of God's producing the
 world was altogether voluntary, and absolutely free; it did not issue from

Fecit quod op-
 timum potuit
 ait. Plato in
 Tim.

Ἀλλ' οὐ μὲν αὐτὸ ὁμοθυμαδὸν τὸν
 θεὸν, αἰτίον ὃ ἀπορρίπτει αἰς τὴν
 σκιάς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τῆς λαμπρῆς
 τὸ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. Bal. de creat. a.
 Ὅτι οὐκ ἀποσκόπεται τῆς δύναμει.
 Id.

him ἀνεγκλίτως, without counsel or choice, not (as some
 Philosophers have conceited) by natural or necessary ema-
 nation or result; as heat from fire, or light from the Sun,
 or shadow from a body; but from a wise free-choice: He
 so made the world, that he could wholly have abstained
 from making it, that he could have framed it otherwise,
 according to an infinite variety of ways. He could not be fatally determi-
 ned, there being no superiour cause to guide him, or to constrain him any wise
 (to do, or not to do; to do thus, or otherwise.) He could not be obliged
 to impart any perfection, being absolute master of all things
 possible, and debtour unto none upon any account: 'Tis
 his privilege therefore, and property to perform all things

Ἄλλοι βασιλεῖς εἰσιν, οἱ βασιλεῖς θεῶν,
 θεοὶ δ' ἀνάγκη. Philomon.

κατὰ

κατὰ βούλην τοῦ Θεοῦ αὐτοῦ, according to the counsel of his will, or according to his wise pleasure, as St. Paul expresseth it; and accordingly we hear the Elders in the Revelation acknowledging: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, & διὰ τὸ θεῖον σου, and for thy will they are and were created:* They do affirm God's pleasure to be the cause of his creating things, and they imply its being so to be the ground of our due veneration, gratitude, and all devotion; these being tributes due unto free goodness and bounty: If he made all things fatally, no praise or thanks were due to him; if he doeth things so, there is no reason to offer prayers to him, to seek his aid, or implore his favour; no devotion toward him hath a ground, or can subsist. 'Tis also evident, that if the world had been produced in way of necessary emanation, that it should have been eternal; as if the Sun had been eternal, his light had been eternal also; if fire had been, its heat likewise had been from eternity: but that the world was produced in time, not long since, within six or seven thousand years, not only faith and divine Chronology do assure us, but reason also shews, and all history conspires to persuade us; there being no plain monument, or probable memory of actions beyond that time: and by what progressions mankind was propagated over the world; how, and when, and where Nations were planted, Empires raised, Cities built, Arts invented or improved, it is not very hard to trace near the original times and places. The world therefore, in respect of time conceivable by us, is very young, and not many successions of ages, or lives of men, have passed between its beginning and ours; whence it plainly appears, that it was freely produced by God.

And how he produced it, the Scripture farther teacheth us; it was not with any laborious care or toil; not with the help of any engines or instruments subservient; not by inducing any preparatory dispositions or aptitudes, but *κατὰ τὸ βούλην*, by his mere willing (as *Clemens Alex.* speaks) his will and word were (as *Tertull.* expounds it) the hands, by which it is said that God made the heavens; at his call they did all immediately spring up out of nothing, at his command they presently ranged themselves into order: it was not a high strain of Rhetorick in *Moses* (as *Longinus* deemed) thus to describe the creation, but a most proper expression of that incomprehensible efficacy, which attends the divine will and decree.

But since God did not only make the world freely, but wisely; and since all wise agents act to some purpose, and aim at some end, why (may it be inquired) did God make the world? what impulsive reason or inducement was there moving his will to do it? we may answer with *Plato*; ἀγαθὸς ὢν, he was good; and he that is good, doth not envy any good to any thing: His natural benignity and munificence was the pure motive, incited or invited him to this great action of communicating existence, and futable perfection to his creatures, respectively: No benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him; he could receive no accession of beatitude; he did not need any profit or pleasure from without, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himself: Can a man, can any creature, be profitable to God? No; our goodness doth not extend to him; we cannot any wise advance or amplify him thereby; 'tis because goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of it self; because love is active and fruitful in beneficence; because highest excellency is void of all envy, selfishness and tenacy, that the world was produced such as it was; those perfections being intrinsic to God's nature (for *God is love*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 8, that is, essentially loving and good) disposed him to bestow so much of being, beauty, delight and comfort to his creatures. Hence, the earth (saith the *Psal.* 33. 5. *Psalmist*) is full of the goodness of the Lord; that is, every thing therein, according to its state and degree, is an effect of the divine goodness, partakes thereof both in its being, and in its enjoyments; and, The Lord (saith he again) *Psal.* 145. 9. is good to all, and his tender mercies (or his bowels of affection) are over all his works: he is good, and tenderly kind toward all his works, as well in produ-

Eph. 1. 11.

Rev. 4. 11.

Adv. Her.

mog. 45.

Long. Sc. 7.

Quærit quid propositum sit Deo? bonitas; ita certe Plato ait: Quæ Deo faciendi mundum causa fuit? Bonus est; boni nulla cuiusquam boni invidia est. Sen. Ep. 65.

Ἐποίησεν ἀγγέλους, ἀρχαγγέλους, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ψυχὰς ἀσώματων νοσίων ἐποίησεν δὲ δι' ἡμεῶν καὶ ἡμῶν, δι' ἀγαθότητα ἢ μόνον, &c. Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 9. ad Stagir.

Job 22. 2.

Psal. 16. 2.

1 *Joh.* 4. 8.

Psal. 33. 5.

—119. 64.

Psal. 145. 9.

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cing them, as preserving them; in freely rendring them capable of receiving good, as in carefully providing, and liberally dispensing good unto them: *That thou givest them* (saith the *Psalmist*, speaking with respect to the University of things) *they gather*; *thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good*; it is from God's open hand (that is, from his unconfined bounty and liberality) that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them; which satisfieth their needs, and satiateth their desires: A glimpse of which truth the ancient

Arist. Metaph. l. 4.
Πρώτιστον μὲν ἔργον διὸν μὴ δίδαστο
πάντων. Parmenides.
Ἡ δ' ἔστι, ὅς πάντως μετατρέχει
ἀθανάτοισιν. Hesiod.

Pagans seem to have had, when they (as *Aristotle* observed) did commonly suppose love to have been the first and chief of the Gods; the original source and framer of things. But I will no longer insist on this Point in way of doctrine or disquisition; I shall only adjoin a little application.

1. The belief and consideration of this Point (that God is the Maker of Heaven and Earth) must necessarily beget in us highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God, and his divine Excellencies, his Power, Wisdom and Goodness: For what a Power must that be (how unconceivably great both intensively and extensively must it be?) which could so expeditely and easily rear such a stupendiously vast frame? vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection that we can make? the earth, on which we dwell, divided into so many great Empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion, as a little sand hath to the earth it self, or a drop of water to the great Ocean? What a Wisdom must that be, how unconceivably large and penetrant, that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures (the artifice, which appears in one, in the least of which doth so far transcend our conceit) could digest them so fully, could connect them so firmly in such an order? What a Goodness and Benignity must it be (how immense and boundless?) that did extend it self in affection and care, for so many creatures, abundantly providing for the need and comfort of them all? how transcendently glorious is the Majesty of him, that was author of all those beauties and strength, those splendours and magnificencies we do with so much pleasure and so much wonder behold? Well might the devout *Psalmist* and divine *Prophets* hence frequently take occasion of exciting us to praise, and celebrate the perfections of God: Well might even Heathen Philosophers from contemplation of the world be raised into fits of composing *Hymns* and *Elogies* of its great Maker.

2. This consideration likewise may confer to the breeding of hearty gratitude and humble affection toward God; for that we are upon many accounts very nearly and highly concerned in this great production. We our selves, whatever we are, and all we have, and all we enjoy; all our intrinsecal endowments, and all our extrinsecal accommodations are parts thereof, and did proceed from God; yea all the whole frame was designed by him with a particular regard, and from an especial good will unto us; was fitted for our enjoyment and use: The world was made as a convenient house for us to dwell in, as a pleasant theatre for us to view, as a profitable school for our instruction, as a holy temple for us to perform offices of no less sweet than reasonable devotion; for our benefit those huge orbs roll incessantly, diffusing their glorious light, and dispensing their kindly influences; for our sake the earth is decked with all that goodly furniture, and stored with all that abundance of comfortable provisions: All these things out of pure benevolence, not being moved with any desert of ours, not regarding any profit of his own, before any desire or any thought of ours (before we were capable of wishing or thinking) God was pleased to contrive, and to accomplish for us: *We* (said a *Philosopher*) *regard and esteem our selves overmuch, if we think our selves worthy, that so great matters should be agitated for our sake*; and the *Psalmist* signifies the same, when upon contemplation of the World, he saith: *When I con-*

Mundus, quasi communis Deorum atque hominum domus, aut urbs utrorumque. Cic. de N. D. II. de Fin. IV.

Mundus Deorum templum. Sen. de Ben. VII. 7. Epist. 9. Cic. in som. Sci. Philo. de Mun. 2. &c.

Πυχὴν παιδαγωγέον, καὶ διδασκαλαίον, &c. Bal. M.

— ἡ πόλις ἀμυγδαλῶν ἵδμεν, ἡ δὲ κατὰ δυνάμειν ἀντίδοσις, &c. Chrys. ἀνδρ. ζ. vid.

Cogitavit nos ante natura quam genuit, &c. Sen. de Benef. 2. 23.

Nimis nos suspicimus, si digni nobis videmur, propter quos tanta moveatur. Sen. de Ira, 27.

Psal. 8.

consider

sider the heavens, the works of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? That the author of so great and glorious a work should vouchsafe to regard so mean things as us, to visit us continually with a provident inspection and care over our welfare, to lay so vast projects, and accomplish so mighty works in regard to us; what a demonstration of admirable condescension, what a ground of wonder and astonishment, what an argument of love and thankfulness toward God is this?

3. Yea what a ground and motive to humility should this consideration be unto us? What is man? what, I say, is man in comparison to him that made the world? what is our strength, what our wit, what our goodness, what any quality or ability of ours, in respect to the perfection of those things in him? how weak, silly, narrow, poor and wretched things must we needs appear to our selves, when seriously we consider the immense excellencies displayed in the World's creation; how should this depress and debase us in our conceits about our selves? Especially if we reflect upon our own unprofitableness, our ingratitude, and our injustice toward our Creatour; how none, or how scant returns we have made to him, who gave unto us, and to all things for us, our being and theirs, our all and theirs; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our services we have been; yea how preposterously, instead of our due homage and tribute, we have repay'd him affronts and injuries; frequently opposing his will, and abusing his goodness!

4. This consideration is further a proper inducement unto trust and hope in God; and withal a fit ground of consolation to us in all our needs and distresses. He that was able to do so great things, and hath been willing to do so much for us; he that having made all things, can dispose of all, and doeth (as King *Dan. 4. 35.* *Nebuchadnezzar* taught by experience confessed) according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, *What doest thou?* How can we distrust his protection or succour in our exigencies? This consideration good men have been wont to apply to such purposes: *My help (saith the Psalmist) cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.* Well might he be assured, having so potent and faithful an aid: and, *Happy (saith he again) is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth; the sea, and all that therein is.* Happy indeed he surely is; no disappointment or disaster can befall him, who doth with reason confide in him that made the world, and can manage it to his advantage. The Prophet *Jeremy* begins his Prayer thus: *O Lord God, behold thou hast made heaven and earth by thy great power and stretched-out arms; and there is nothing too hard for thee.* The creation of the World is such an experiment of God's power and goodness, as may support our faith in all encounters; so that we should not think any thing so difficult, but that God is able, nor so high, but that God is willing to perform it for us, if it make toward our real good.

5. Finally, This consideration minisheth a general incitement unto all obedience; which from God's production of all things doth appear, upon several accounts, due and reasonable; all other things do constantly obey the law imposed on them, insist in the course defined to them; and shall we only be disobedient and refractory, irregular and exorbitant? Shall all the hosts of heaven most readily and punctually obey God's summons? Shall the pillars of heaven tremble, and be astonished at his reproof? Shall the sea, with its proud waves, be curb'd and confined by his decree? Shall fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds (such rude and boisterous things) fulfil his word? as they are all said to do; and shall we be unruly and rebellious? we, who are placed in the top of nature, for whom all nature was made, to whom all nature serves; shall we only, of all things in nature, transgress against the Authour and Governour of nature?

But I leave the farther improvement of this grand Point to your meditation, concluding with the exhortation of that Angel in the *Apocalypse*: *Fear God, and give glory to him; worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water: Even to him be all obedience, and adoration, and praise for ever and ever. Amen.*

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIII.

OF THE Truth and Divinity OF THE Christian Religion.

EPHES. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) having heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.

THAT our Religion in gross is true and agreeable to reason, is a ground upon which the truth of its single doctrines and articles of faith doth lean; it is therefore requisite that it first be well supported, or that we be thoroughly assured thereof. Being therefore engaged at other times to discourse upon the particular points of Christian doctrine, which suppose this general one; I shall take occasion collaterally in these exercises to insist upon this subject; supposing in those, what in these we shall endeavour to prove; so both avoiding there such grand digressions, or the treating upon matters not directly incident; and supplying here what seems necessary or useful there to the confirmation of *our faith*.

Now in the words (I did now read) St. Paul styles the Christian doctrine (and in many other places of Scripture it is also so called) *the word of truth* (that is a most true doctrine) and *the gospel of our salvation* (that is a message brought from heaven by our Saviour and his Apostles, in which the ways and means of attaining salvation (that is, of that best happiness which we are capable of) the overtures thereof from God, and the conditions in order there-to required from us are declared.) And that we have reason to entertain it as such, I shall immediately address my self to shew.

Μὴ ἐξέταζε,
ἀλλὰ πίστευ-
σον. Orig. 1.
pag. 8, 9.
Orig. 6. p. 283.
Πίστιν οὐ
συνδύναμι δέ-
λων, ἢ ἀποδεί-
ξεων.

It was anciently objected by *Celsus*, and other Adversaries of our Religion, that Christianity did exact from men *πίστιν ἢ ἀλογον πίστιν*, a bare groundless faith; did impose *νόμους ἀναποδείκτους*, laws incapable of proof; (that is, as to the goodness and reasonableness of them) did inculcate this rule, *μη ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ μένον*.

Εἰς οὐρανὸν
ἀναβήσεται ὁ
κύριος ὁ θεός
καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία
αὐτοῦ, ὡς ἔγραψεν
ὁ κύριος ἐν τῇ
ἐπιστολῇ τοῦ
Παύλου πρὸς
τὸν Τιμόθεον.
Clem. Alex.

as evident in it self, the worth and consequence of the matter ; but refers the decision on either part (so far as concerns every particular man) to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which to such purposes God hath indued every man. And that it can proceed no otherwise, appears farther from the nature of that faith it requires : It commends faith as a great virtue, and therefore supposes it both voluntary and reasonable ; it promises ample rewards thereto, and so implies it a work not of necessity or chance, but of care and industry ; it declares infidelity to be very blameable, and threatens severe punishment thereto ; why ? because it signifies irrational negligence or perverseness.

1 Thess. 5. 21.
1 John 4. 1.
Matt. 24. 4.
Eph. 5. 6.
1 Pet. 3. 15.

In fine, Christianity doth not inveigle any man by flight, nor compel him by force, (being indeed commonly destitute of those advantages ; nor being able to use them, if it would) but fairly by reason persuades him to embrace it ; it doth not therefore shun examination, nor disclaim the judgment of reason ; but earnestly seeks and procures the one, chearfully and confidently appeals to the other. *Examine all things ; hold fast that which is good. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God. See that no man deceive you. Be always ready, with meekness and respect, to give to every one that demands it of you, an account of the hope in you.* These are Maxims which Christianity goes upon in the propagation and maintenance of its self.

Bas. in Pl. 15.

Joh. 3. 21, 22.

Indeed after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial assent, without exception, to its particular doctrines grounded upon, or deduced from them. When, I say, it hath, to the satisfaction of a man's mind, with solid reason made good its principles ; it then enjoins men to surcease farther scruple or debate concerning what it teaches or draws from them ; which is a proceeding most reasonable, and conformable to the Method used in the strictest Sciences : For the principles of any Science being either demonstrated out of some higher Science, or evidenced by fit experiments to common sense ; and being thence granted and received, 'tis afterward unlawful and absurd to challenge the conclusions collected from them : So if it have been proved and acknowledged that our Principles are true (for instance, that God is perfectly veracious, and that Christian Religion hath his authority or attestation to it) 'twill then be a part of absurd levity and inconsistency to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein ; and in this sense, or in these cases, it is true indeed that Christianity doth engage us to believe simply and purely, doth silence natural reason, and condemn curious enquiry, and prohibit dispute, especially to persons of meaner capacities or improvements. And thus, I take it, those Christians of old were to be understood, who so much commended immediate faith, excluded reason from being too busy in matters of Religion, discountenanced that curiosity, which searched into and would needs sound those inscrutable mysteries, which our Religion teaches. Our Religion then will allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an Infidel to consider and judge of its truth, although it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconsistent, as to doubt of any particular doctrine therein ; seeing by so questioning a part, he in effect renounces the whole, and subverts the foundation of his faith ; at least ceases thereby to be a steady Christian. I might then well invert our Adversaries discourse, and offer it as a good argument of our Religion its truth, that it alone among all Religions, with a candour and confidence peculiar to truth, calls us to the light, is willing, yea desirous to undergo trial ; I add, yea challenges as its due from all men, and demands it of them as a necessary duty to hear it, to consider it seriously, to pass sentence upon it : for as commonly error and groundless conceit, being conscious of their own weakness, are timorous and suspicious, and thence ready to decline all proof and conflict of reason ; so truth, knowing its own strength, is daring and resolute, enters boldly into the lists, being well assured (or hopeful) of good success in the combat.

Which proceeding, proper to Christianity, is in it self very plausible, and may well beget a favourable prejudice on its side ; and that it is not confident without

without reason, will appear upon our examining the principles and grounds on which it stands. The *first* Principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other Religions) is that there is one God (sovereign and transcendent in all perfections, the maker and governour of all things.) The *next* (which also no Religion doth not acknowledge) is, that God is perfectly veracious, so that whatever appears to be asserted, or attested to, by him, is certainly true: which principles (by reasons I hope proper and sufficient) I partly have proved, and partly shall hereafter upon occasion shew. A *third* is, that God is the author of the Christian doctrine and law; that he hath revealed this doctrine to mankind, and confirmed it by his testimony; that he hath imposed this law upon us, and established it by his authority. This Principle (being the foundation and sum of our faith) involves matter of fact; and consequently being not evident immediately in it self, doth (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid persuasion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe it like reasonable men, not (as *Pagans* and *Mahometans*, and those of other Sects do) upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance, as also for settling the ground of particular Articles comprehended under this, I shall endeavour to shew the reasonableness thereof; advancing my discourse by several steps and degrees. I observe *first* that

Μαθηταὶ τοῖνυν ἔτι οὐκ ἔλλωκεν
διαλέγεσθαι, ἵνα μὴ ὡς δῶμα-
ματα καὶ βουλήματα, ἀλλ' ὡς παρὰ
ἐναντίας αὐτοῦ στέλῃ ἐν ἡμῖν ἐλπίδι.
Chrys. in 1 Cor. 1. 17.

I. It is reasonable to suppose that God should at some time or season fully and clearly reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as he and they stand related to each other; concerning his nature and will, concerning our state and duty, respectively. The nature and attributes of God, the nature and qualities of man, being compared, do persuade thus much.

It is apparent to common experience, that mankind being left to it self (especially in matters of this kind) is very insufficient to direct it self: that it is apt to lie under woful ignorance, to wander in uncertainty, to fall into error, to possess it self with vain conceit, to be abused with any sort of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtilty of naughty men, or the wildness of its own fond passions and desires can put upon it, or bring it under; 'tis consequently exposed to all those vices, dishonourable, hurtful and destructive to its nature; and to all those miseries, which from ignorance and error, from vice and wickedness do naturally spring; especially to an estrangement from God, and an incapacity of his love and favour. The two only remedies of all these mischiefs (natural light and primitive tradition) how little they did avail to cure them; how the one was too faint in it self and easily lost in mists of prejudice, from ill education and bad custom prevailing generally; how the other (besides its other defects) soon was polluted, and indeed quite spoiled by adulterate mixtures of fond, impure and vile superstitions; woful experience doth more than enough evince. We see, that not only the generality of mankind did sometime lie in this sad condition, but that even the most elevated and refined wits (those among men, who by all possible improvement of their reason did endeavour to raise themselves from this low estate; to rescue their minds from the common ignorance, the mistakes, the superstitions and follies of the world) could by no means in any good measure attain those ends: for what did their earnest enquiries, or their restless studies produce, but dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager disputations conclude, but in irreconcilable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainties than were when they began? Most were plung'd into a desperate Scepticism (a doubt and diffidence of all things) none arrived higher than some faint conjectures, or some unsteady opinions concerning those matters of highest consequence; such notions as were not effectual enough to produce in them a practice (in any good measure) suitable to the dignity of man's nature, to the duty he owes to God, to the capacities man hath of doing and receiving good; from which due glory to God, or much benefit to man did accrue. *Ἐμπαιδίσθον ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς, they were made* Rom. 1. 21. *vain* (or, they were frustrated, deluded, befooled) in their reasonings and dis- Eph. 4. 17.

puts; the result of their busy speculations was, that *their foolish heart was darkened*; so darkened, that with all the light they had, they could not see any thing; at least not clearly discern what chiefly it concerned them to know.

1 Cor. i. 21.

The world by wisdom (by all the wisdom it could get) *did not know God*; did not acquire a requisite measure of knowledge in divine things; did not how-

Rom. i. 21,
22. 18.

ever know him so, as to glorify him, as to thank him for the benefits received from him, as to bring forth worthy fruits of piety and virtue. So much St. Paul observed of them; and not he alone did observe it, but even themselves were sensible of this their unhappiness; whence so many complaints concerning the blindness and infirmity of man's mind, concerning the obscurity and uncertainty of things, concerning the insuperable difficulty of finding truth, concerning the miserable consequences from these, do occur among them.

—*Hinc causa
mali mortali-
bus agris Na-
turam nescire
Dei.*

Now this being the natural state of men, destitute of divine conduct and assistance; do they not (I pray) greatly need another light to guide them in this darkness, or to bring them out of it; a helpful hand to free them from these inconveniences? and is it not reasonable to suppose, that God who is alone able, will also be willing in due time to afford it? He, who in nature is most benign and bountiful, most pitiful and gracious; whose goodness fills the earth, and whose mercy is over all his works; he, who bears to man the special relation of a Father, and bears to him a suitable tenderness of affection and good will; he, all whose attributes seem concerned in engaging him upon this performance; not only his Goodness to *inspire* him, and his Wisdom to *direct* him, but even his Justice in some manner to *oblige* him thereto.

Psal. 33. 5.
104. 24.

Isa. 49. 15.

1. His Goodness: *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?* Yea, though 'tis unnatural and unusual, 'tis yet possible she may, because nature in her is not unalterably constant, and the same; but the immutable God cannot so cease to be mindful of, to be compassionate toward his children. That gracious ear cannot hear mankind groan so dolefully under bitter oppressions; that pitiful eye cannot behold his own dear off-spring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless distress, without feeling some pity, without being moved to reach some relief; such notes surely cannot be grateful, such spectacles cannot be pleasant to him, nor can he then forbear long to provide means of removing them from his presence. We esteem it want of goodness (yea an effect of very bad disposition) not to direct a bewildered traveller, not to relieve, if we can, even a stranger fallen into great distress: and if we being in such degree bad, are inclinable to perform such good offices, how much more ready may we suppose him, who is goodness it self, (goodness infinite and absolute) to do the like for all mankind, so much needing his guidance and help? He who hath settled our outward estate in so advantageous a posture, who hath made provisions so various and ample for the needs and conveniences (yea for the pleasure) of our bodies, would he have so little care over our better part, and leave our souls so slenderly furnished, letting them pine as it were for want of spiritual sustenance? how can we think his good providence defective in so main, so principal a part thereof? Thus doth divine goodness (to my apprehension) very strongly confirm our supposition,

Vid. Ezek. 16.

2. And his Wisdom enforces the same. God made the world to express his goodness, and to display his glory, and his goodness who can be sensible of his glory who can perceive, who can promote, but man? but he who is endued with reason, enabling him to reflect upon the good he feels, to admire the excellency he discovers, to render grateful acknowledgments for the one, to utter acclamations of praise to the other? which purposes yet will be utterly (or at least in great measure) frustrated, should God for ever suffer men to continue in such ignorance, doubt, or mistake concerning himself; if men are not fully persuaded that he made the world and governs it, how can they pay those due homages of dread to his glorious power, of admiration to his excellent wisdom, of love to his transcendent goodness? This grand theatre would (as it were) stand useless, and all the wonders acted thereupon would appear in vain, should there be wanting a spectator; should man be altogether blind.

or heedless; yea man's faculty it self, that his seeing faculty of mind would signifie nothing, were there not a light rendring things visible to him. Common sense hath dictated to men, that man is capable of shewing respect, of performing duty and service to God, that also God requires and expects them from him; the same declares, that God best knows what kinds of service, what expressions of respect best please him. Reason tells, that God would have man act in the best manner, according to the design of his nature; that he would have the affairs of men proceed in some good order, that he even desires earnestly the good of men, and delights in their happiness: and if so, 'tis reasonable to suppose, that being most wise he should dispose fit means for accomplishing those ends; for securing himself, as it were, from disappointment; that therefore he should impart to men a competent knowledge of himself, should declare his good will and pleasure to them, should reveal both the best way of their serving him, and the best means of their attaining happiness to themselves. So divine wisdom grounds an argument for our supposition.

3. God's justice also seems not a little to favour it; every good Governour thinks it just to take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws; he causes them therefore to be solemnly promulgated, that all may take notice; if any of them by long disuse are become unknown, he revives the knowledge of them by new proclamations; to quicken obedience he propounds fit rewards, and deters from disobedience by menacing suitable punishments, knowing man's nature resty and unapt to move without these spurs: And is it likely the sovereign Governour and Judge of all the world should observe less equity in his administrations? that he should neglect any means necessary or apt to promote his subjects performance of their duty, to prevent the breaches of his laws? He that loves righteousness above all, he that so earnestly desires to be duly obeyed, he that infinitely delights in his subjects good; can he fail sufficiently to declare his will, to encourage men to comply with it, to terrifie them from transgressing it? will he suffer his laws to remain unknown, or uncertain; will he not consider the infirmities of his subjects, will he leave any fair apology for disobedience? No, the superlative justice of God seems to perswade the contrary.

4. I might add, that generally it seems unbecoming the Majesty divine, that he should endure the world, his kingdom, to continue under a perpetual usurpation and tyranny; to suffer, that his imperial throne should be possessed, his authority abused, his name insulted over by enemies and rebels against him; (by evil spirits, whether those of hell, or those on earth) that a cruel fiend, that a cursed ghost, that a brute beast, that a chimæra of man's fancy should be worshipped, while himself is forgotten and neglected, is dishonoured and despised; that iniquity and wickedness (with all the filthy brood of ignorance and error) should every where flourish and domineer, while righteousness and vertue lie prostrate and are trampled upon: This surely the King of glory, the great patron of goodness will not permit to be; sooner rather may we conceive that, to remove these indecencies and these mischiefs, he would presently turn the world into a desert and solitude, or pour a deluge of water over the face of the earth, or with flames of vengeance consume it into ashes.

We cannot indeed judge or determine concerning the special circumstances or limits of God's dealing toward man in this particular; concerning the time when, the manner how, the measure according to which God will dispense those revelations of himself; those depend upon mysteries of counsel and wisdom surpassing our comprehension: That God should for a while connive at mens ignorance, and suffer them to grope after divine truth; to try them, as he did the *Israelites* in the wilderness, how they would behave themselves in that state; to prove how they would use their talent of natural light, to make them sensible of their own infirmity, to shew them whence all their welfare must proceed, on whom all their happiness depends, to make them more able to value, more desirous to embrace the redress vouchsafed them;

Acts 10. 38.
Eph. 2. 2.

Acts 17. 27, 30.
14. 16.
Deut. 8. 15, 16.
Exod. 16. 8.

172. Gen 15.
16, &c.

them; as also, to demonstrate his own great clemency, long-suffering and patience; that I say for such purposes, and others unsearchable by our shallow understanding, God should for some time forbear, with a full evidence to declare all his mind to men, is not so strange or unlikely; but that for ever, through all courses of time, he should leave men in so forlorn a condition, in such a depth of ignorance, such perplexity of doubt, such captivity under sin, such subjection to misery, seems not probable, much less can it seem improbable that he hath done it: It cannot, I say, in any reason seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom or justice of God clearly to discover to us, what he requires us to do, what good he intends for us, what way leads to our happiness, how we may avoid misery. This consideration if it do not prove peremptorily, that God cannot but sometime make such a revelation, nor that he yet hath actually done it (forasmuch as we cannot reach the utmost possibilities of things, nor are fit judges of what God must necessarily do; although to my apprehension this sort of reasoning, with due caution used, subsisting in general terms, and not over precisely applying it to particular cases (implicated by circumstances and specialties not falling under our judgment) hath great force;) yet it removes all obstruction to our belief, and disposes us with more readiness to admit the reasons which follow: For it being not improbable, yea according to the reason of the thing very probable that he should do it, we have cause with attention and expectation of success on this hand to regard the arguments that pretend to prove he hath done it.

This is the first step of our discourse, at which we shall stop for the present.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIV.

OF THE Impiety and Imposture OF PAGANISM AND MAHOMETANISM.

EPHES. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

THAT the Christian doctrine is what St. Paul here calls it, *a word of truth*, and did proceed from the God of truth, is the Proposition we are endeavouring to verify and persuade. To that purpose we did first discourse, that it is very probable God should sometime clearly and fully reveal his mind to men, concerning matters relating to his own glory and service, their good and happiness.

II. I now proceed another step, and assert, that no other Revelation of that kind and importance hath been made; that no other Religion, which hath been or is now in being, can with good probability pretend to have thus proceeded from God; so as by him to have been designed for a general, a perpetual, a complete instruction, and obligation of mankind. There have appeared but *three* pretences thereto, that of ancient *Paganism*, that of *Mahometanism*, and that of *Judaism* (for the more particular pretensions of enthusiastical Impostours have been subordinate either to Christianity it self, or to one of those; and besides having found no considerable progress or continuance in the world, nor countenance (as it were) from providence, are not pertinent to this consideration, besides that they are all generally disclaimed) but that none of those three pretences are well grounded, I shall, examining each briefly, shew: (briefly, I say, for I need not insist on them largely, the matter having past so many good pens, especially that excellent one

one of *Grotius*; however it falling in my way and method, I shall offer what hath concerning it occur'd to my thoughts.)

For the first, ancient *Paganism*; it did indeed (in the parcels thereof or by retail) pretend to a kind of divine Revelation; that it derived its notions and its forms of practice from the direction of invisible powers, given to single persons or places, in several ways, (by immediate apparition, by prophetic inspiration, by significant events or prodigies) but it did not, nor could not pretend to any one uniform revelation from the sovereign God solemnly delivered and directed to all mankind; which is an argument not only that those pretended revelations were imperfect and insufficient to the ends propounded, but also false and counterfeit: For we may well suspect those edicts, which are clancularly set up in corners, and which run not in the King's name, nor are marked with his royal signature, to have proceeded from impostours, or from rebels; especially if the matter of them doth not advance, but depress his authority; doth not promote but prejudice his interest; doth not comport with, but contravene his pleasure, otherwise declared. And such was the manner, such the matter of those *Pagan* revelations. Put the whole body of that Religion (if I may so call it) together, and you have nothing but a lump of confusion and inconsistency, of deformity and fithiness, of vanity and folly, little as may be therein tending to the reverence of God, or to the good of man, to the promoting of vertue and goodness in humane conversation, to the breeding love and goodwill in men toward one another, to the maintaining justice, peace and good order in societies; much apt to produce the contrary effects. It was not (I say) ever one simple or uniform, one fixed or constant thing, but according to difference of place and time various, and mutable; diversly shaped and model'd according to the fancy and humour, design or interest of the state that allowed, the priests that managed it, and the people that received it; a plain sign (that excepting some general scattered notions deduced from ancient Tradition) it did wholly proceed from humane device, or from a worse cause (the suggestion of evil spirits, abusing the fondness and pravity of men.) Survey it, and what shall you find therein, but a bundle of idle, ill contrived, incredible and inconsistent stories; (arguing nothing of truth or sincerity, little of wit or discretion in those who invented them) those attended by practices foolish, lewd and cruel; unworthy of humane nature, contrary to common sense and honesty? Their worship (that of the supreme Lord being neglected, &c.) you will see directed towards objects most improper and unbecoming: to the ghosts of dead men; men in their lives (if we may trust the reports of their devoutest adorers) famous for nothing so much as for vicious enormities, for thefts and rapine, for murders and parricides, for horrid lusts, adulteries, rapes and incests; and such persons, alive or dead, what good or wise man would not rather loath and despise, than worship or respect? to somewhat, though not otherwise yet, in degree of nature worse than those, even to brute beasts; to the most vile, the most mischievous of them; (dogs, serpents, crocodiles) to pay veneration unto which how unspeakably abject a mind doth it argue? yea they stooped lower, even to creatures inanimate, to the stars and elements, to rivers and trees, and other such things, which we see acting by natural necessity, not yielding any signification of understanding, of sense, of life in them; which therefore, so far inferior to us in nature, how sottish a baseness was it to adore? nay, they descended to a lower degree, if it may be, of folly, dedicating temples, and offering sacrifices to things even void of subsistence; to mere qualities and accidents of things, to the passions of our minds, to the diseases of our bodies, to the accidents of our lives: Who would think any man could be so mad as to reckon impudence, that odious vice; a fever, that troublesome disease; or fortune (that unaccountable name of nothing; which wise men so little trust, and fools so much complain of) among things divine and venerable? Can I mention any thing worse than all these, which the degenerate ignorance, and naughtiness of man hath crouched to? yes, (with a folly of all most wretched and deplorable) they fawned upon, they obey.

*Inde furor
vulgo, quod
numina vi-
cinorum
Odit uterque
locus, dum
solos credit
habendos
Esse Deos, quos
ipse colit—
Juv. Sat. 15.*

obeyed, they offered their dearest pledges of life and fortune to the sworn enemies as of God and goodness, so of their own good and welfare, to the very cursed fiends of hell: whom, if they had not been extremely blind and senseless, by the qualities of those rites and mysteries they suggested (so bloody and cruel, so lewd and foul) they might easily have detected to be so. Such objects as these was their devotion spent upon, to these they paid their respect, in these they reposed their confidence; And was such a Religion likely to proceed from God, was it like to produce any glory to him, or any benefit to man? from such thorns what fruits can we hope should sprout of good life, of sound morality? what piety toward God, what justice, truth or goodness toward man; what sobriety or purity in themselves can we expect should arise from such conceits, and such practices? surely, no other than those, which St. Paul describes in the first Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and in the second of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and St. Peter 1. 4. 3. which history plainly shews to have been no slanderous imputations upon Gentilism. If any good did appear in the conversation of some men, who followed that Religion, it is not to be imputed to the influence of that, but to some better cause; to the reliques of good nature, to the glimmerings of natural light, breaking forth in some, and by their precept or example conveyed to others; to the necessary experience concerning the mischiefs of vice, and advantages of virtue; or (perhaps also) to secret whispers and impressions of divine grace upon some mens minds, vouchsafed in pity to them and others whom they might teach or lead into ways somewhat better, than those common ones of extreme wickedness and folly; to these, I say, or such causes all instances of practice in any measure innocent or commendable may rather be ascribed, than to that Religion, which was much apter to corrupt and debauch, than to better or civilize men; for with what intention soever they were spoken, there was not much of real calumny in those words of Lucretius

*sapiens olim
Religio peperit scelerata, atque improba facta.*

But it is needless to discourse much against that which hath no reasonable patron, and which scarce any wise man, when it was in fashion, did seriously think to have had any truth or reality in it. Plato, you know, often inveighs against the inventors of those beastly Fables in heathen Theology (upon which yet all the œconomy of their religious practice did depend;) Aristotle Arist. Metaph. 12. 8. attributes the constitution of those Religions to the subtilty of Statesmen; there is none of the Fathers, I think, or any other disputer against Heathenism who hath more directly or earnestly oppugned it than Pliny hath: There was Lib. 2. cap. 7. few or none of the Philosophers, who did not signify his dislike or contempt Vid. Plut. de superst. p. 291. De Leg. X. &c. of the vulgar opinions and practices concerning Religion; what Cicero saith De dio. p. 240. Tusc. 9. 1. Ep. 301. of one part, the wiser sort did judge of all: *Tota res est inventa fallaciis aut ad quæstum, aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem* (the whole business was deceitfully forged either for gain, or out of superstition, or from mistake.) They did indeed, most or all of them, in their external behaviour comply with common practice, out of a politick discretion, for their safety and quiet sake; but in their inward thoughts and judgments they (as by many passages in their Writings doth appear) believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it: they observed those things (as Seneca said) *tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam diis grata* (not as acceptable to the gods themselves, but as commanded by the laws of their country.) And indeed this dissimulation was so notorious, that even the vulgar discerned it; and therefore seldom the wiser men were reputed among them the most religious, but liable to accusation for impiety; and some of them ye know suffered extremities upon that score, who could not altogether conceal that contempt, which the vanity of popular superstitions had begotten toward them in their hearts.

Har Es dicuntur. Es creduntur stultissime, Es plena sunt futilitatis, summaque levitatis Balbus in Cic. de N. D. 2.

Vid. August. de Civit. D. lib. 4. 33. lib 6. 10.

I might add that all those *Pagan Religions* did vanish together with the countenance of secular authority and power, sustaining them; which shews plainly enough, that they had little or no root in the hearty belief or approbation of those who professed them.

And thus much may suffice, I suppose, to declare, that *Paganism* did not proceed from divine Revelation, but from humane invention or suggestion Diabolical.

I shall only adjoin, that the considering this case of *Heathens* may be of good use, (and to that use indeed *St. Paul* hath largely applied it) in confirming what we before urged, The great need of some full and plain Revelation to the world of God's mind, in order to God's glory and man's good; as also it is of singular use (which also the same *Apostle* frequently did put it to) by the contemplation thereof to discover our great obligations to bless and thank God for his great mercy in revealing his heavenly truth to us, from whence we are freed from errors and mischiefs so deplorable; which otherwise from humane infirmity, and the Devil's malice, we should easily (and in a manner necessarily) have incurred.

That Pretence was ancients in standing; but there hath even since Christianity started up another, (*Mahometanism*) which if not upon other accounts, yet in respect to its age, and to the port it bears in the world, demands some consideration; for it hath continued a long time, and hath vastly over-spread the earth: neither is it more formidable in its looks, than peremptory in its words; vaunting it self to be no less than a complete, a general, an ultimate declaration of God's pleasure, cancelling and voiding all others that have gone before. But examining both the substance and circumstances thereof, considering the quality of the instruments by whom, of the times when it was introduced; of the places where, of the people who first, or afterward did receive it; the manner of its rise, progress and continuance; as also the matter it teaches or enjoins; we shall not find stamped on it the genuine characters of a divine original and authority; but have great reason to deem it a brood of most lewd and impudent cozenage. In times of great disturbance and confusion, when barbarous nations, like torrents, did overflow the world, and turned all things upside down; in times of general corruption and disorder in mens minds and manners, when even among Christians ignorance and superstition, dissension and uncharitableness, impiety and iniquity, did greatly prevail; in a very blind and obscure corner of the earth, among a crew of wild thieves and runnagates (such have those *Arabians* been always famed and known to be) this *Sett* had its birth and fosterage; among those fierce and savage over-runners of the world it got its growth and stature; into this sort of people (being indeed in its constitution well accommodated to their humour and *genius*) it was partly insinuated by juggling tricks, partly driven by seditious violence; the first Author hereof being a person, according to the description given of him in their own Legends, of no honest or honourable qualities, but having all the marks of an Impostour; rebellious and perfidious, inhumane and cruel, lewd and lascivious, of a base education, of a fraudulent and turbulent disposition, of a vicious life, pretending to enthusiasms, and working of wonders; but these such as were both in their nature absurd and incredible, and for their use vain and unprofitable: at such a season, and in such a soil, by such means and by such a person (abetted by Associates like himself, whom his arts, or their interests had inveigled to join with him) was this Religion first planted; and for its propagation it had that great advantage of falling in the way of barbarous people, void of learning and civility, and not prepossessed with other notions, or any sense of Religion; who thence (as mankind is naturally susceptible of religious impressions) were capable and apt to admit any Religion first offering it self, especially one so gross as this was, so agreeable to their furious humours and lusts. Afterward being furnished with such Champions, it diffused it self by rage and terror of arms; convincing mens minds only by the sword, and using no other arguments but blows. Upon the same grounds of ignorance and force, it still subsists; neither offering for, nor taking against it self any reason; refusing all examination, and upon extreme penalties forbidding any dispute

dispute about its truth; being indeed so far (whether out of judgment or fatal instinct) wise, as conscious to its self, or foreboding, that the letting in of a little light, and a moderate liberty of discussing its pretences, would easily overthrow it. Now that Divine wisdom should chuse those black and boisterous times to publish his will, is, as if the King should purposely order his Proclamations to be made in a tempestuous night, when no man scarce dared to stir out, nor any man could well see what was done, or hear what was said; much fitter surely to that purpose were a serene and calm day; a time of general civility and peace, like that of *Augustus Caesar*. That the declaration of God's mind should issue from the desarts of *Arabia* (that den of robbers) is as if the King should cause his Edicts to be set up in the blindest and dirtiest nook of the Suburbs; the Market-cross surely, or the Exchange (the place of most general and ordinary concourse) such as, in respect to the world, was the flourishing Empire of *Rome*, were more convenient, and wisely chosen for that purpose: that passing over the more gentle and tractable part of his people, a Prince should send his laws to a rabble of *Banditti*; should pick out for his messenger a most dissolute Varlet, attended with a crew of desperate ruffians, resolved to buffet and rifle all they met; were an odd way of proceeding: To communicate his pleasure unto the better and more orderly sort of people (such as were the subjects of that well governed Empire) by persons of good meaning, mild disposition, and innocent behaviour, (such as were the *Apostles* of our Lord) in a quiet and gentle manner (such as these only used) would surely better become a worthy Prince: Thus even the exterior circumstances of *Mahometanism* (both absolutely and in comparison) belonging to its rise, its growth, its continuance (so full of indecency, of iniquity, of inhumanity) ground strong presumptions against its divinity; or rather plainly demonstrate, that it could not proceed from God, whose truth cannot need such instruments, or such courses to maintain it, whose goodness certainly abhors them. But farther, if we look into the matter and inward frame thereof, we shall find it a mass of absurd opinions, odd stories, and uncouth ceremonies; compounded chiefly of the dregs of Christian Heresies, together with some ingredients of *Judaism* and *Paganism* confusedly jumbled, or unskilfully tempered together. From Christian Heresies it seems to have derived its negative Doctrines, opposite to Christianity; as for instance, when allowing Christ much respect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and that he did really suffer; rejecting his true story, it affixes false ones upon him: as also some positive ones; for example, that unreasonable opinion, so much mis-beseeming God, that God hath a body (*Mahomet* forsooth once touched his hand, and felt it very cold) might be drawn from the *Anthropomorphites*; that Doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events (so prejudicial to all religion, subverting the foundations of justice between God and man, man's free choice in serving God, God's free disposal of rewards futable to mens actions) they probably borrowed from the *Manichees*, a Sect that much obtained in those *Eastern* parts. The *Jew* contributed his ceremonies of Circumcision and frequent purgations by washing, his abstinence from swines flesh, his allowance of polygamy and divorce: I might add, that perhaps from him they filcht that proud, inhumane, and uncivil humour of monopolizing divine favour and good-will to themselves; so of restraining their own kindness and respect to persons of their profession, or sect; condemning, despising, and hating all the world beside themselves; calling all others dogs, and adjudging all to certain damnation; and which is more, affirming, that all of their belief, how wicked soever their lives have been, shall at length assuredly partake of salvation; so partial do they make Almighty God, so addicted to a mere name and outward shew; feigning him as in shape, so in passions humane, and like themselves. Indeed in this main part of religion, a true notion of God, his nature, his attributes, his method of providence, their doctrine is very peccant, representing him in his nature and actions very unworthily. Their descriptions concerning the state of men after death (that main and principal part of Religion, which gives life and vigour to the rest) whence can we better deduce its original, than from the *Pagan* notions or stories of *Elysium* and *Hades*; what better pattern

tern can we find, whence that paradise of corporeal delight, or rather of brutish sensuality, should be transcribed, which any man sees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward to virtue, yea, how much it is apt to detract from, to discourage all performances of reason and honesty? The like we might say of the punishments (which in due correspondence to the rewards they propound) they only or chiefly inflict upon the body; the main part, it seems, of which a *Mahometan* man consists. And must he not be very stupid, who can suffer himself to be persuaded, that such conceits (conceits favourable indeed to pleasure, and indulgent to the flesh, but contrary to virtue, prejudicial to the spirit and reason of man) should come from the God of wisdom and holiness? Farther, how *Mahomet* was inspired, his stories alone will evince; stories patched up out of old histories corrupted, mangled and transplaced; interlarded with fabulous Legends, contrary to all probable records of history (the names, places, times, and all the circumstances whereof he most unskilfully changes and confounds) yea repugnant to the nature and possibility of things; so that in a manner every tale he tells is an evident argument of an ignorant and an impudent Impostour; And he that so blunders and falsifies about matters of fact, who will trust him in matters of right and reason? which things, if it were worth the while, might by various instances be shewed; and you may every where receive satisfaction therein. The like might be said concerning its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue; the institution whereof no man therefore without injury to the divine wisdom can impute thereto. But I shall only add two farther considerations upon this matter: One, that whatever is good or plausible in this Religion (such as are some precepts of justice and charity, although these confined among themselves) may reasonably be supposed taken from Christianity, which being senious in standing, may (in points wherein both agree) well go for the mistress; and however that upon the score of such doctrines or laws, we have no reason to think this Religion came from God; for why should he reveal that again, which in a larger extent, upon better grounds, with more advantage, he had declared before; which also then was commonly embraced and acknowledged? I also observe, that this Religion by its own free concessions doth evidently destroy its self: for it admits Christianity once to have been a true doctrine, proceeding from and attested to by God: but Christianity did ever declare it self to be a general, perpetual, perfect and immutable Rule of faith and practice; that never any accessions thereto, any alterations thereof, ought to be made or admitted; that whatever spirit (coming after it) should offer to innovate, or pretend to new discoveries contrary to, or different from it, must be suspected of delusion; foretelling and forewarning against such endeavours that should appear, as fallacious and mischievous: this it appears (by the Writings of those who first planted Christianity; Writings, which no man in his wits can question to be theirs; being through a continual uninterrupted course of times, from the beginning, by general consent of both friends and adversaries, acknowledged and attested to as so; all characters within them imaginably proper for that purpose confirming the same; as also by the current tradition of their disciples, immediate and mediate, extant in records unquestionable; and by all other means conceivable) this, I say, it most plainly appears, was one grand doctrine and pretence of Christianity at first, which *Mahometanism* acknowledging originally true and divine in the gross, must consequently grant it self to be an Imposture.

And thus much seems sufficient to demonstrate that Religion not to be of a divine extraction. I shall next proceed to consider the pretences of *Judaism*; and to shew that neither it was such a perfect Revelation, as we proved it probable God would vouchsafe to make: But that shall be the subject of another discourse.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XV.

OF THE IMPERFECTION

OF THE Jewish Religion.

EPHES. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

THAT it is probable God should vouchsafe to Mankind a full and clear declaration of his mind and will concerning their duty and their welfare; I did shew: That *Paganism* and *Mahometanism* without reason and truth did or do pretend thereto, I also briefly discoursed; I now proceed to examine the plea, which *Judaism* puts in; and to make good that neither it is well grounded (which, as the cause deserves, I shall do somewhat more largely.) The *Jewish Religion*, we acknowledge, had its birth from the revelation and appointment of God; its truth and its goodness we do not call in question; but yet looking into it, we shall find it in many respects defective, Heb. 7. 18, and wanting the conditions due to such a revelation, as we require. For it was not universal; (neither being directed to, nor fitted for the nature and needs of mankind;) it was not full and complete, it was not designed to be of perpetual obligation, or use.

1. *First*, I say, this *Revelation* was not general; not directed to, or intended for to instruct and oblige mankind: it self expressly affirms so much: the whole tenour and frame thereof shews it; so do all the circumstances of its rise and progress. That it was intended peculiarly for that small Nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth; distinguished, and indeed, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind both on purpose, and in effect; for it so remained for many Ages, (till the *Macedonian* first, and afterward the *Roman* conquests opened the world and disclosed them) hid in a solitary obscurity; even so far as to scape the observation of the most inquisitive surveyours of the earth,

earth, the most curious searchers into the customs of all people (as of *Herodotus* for instance, who nicely describing the places and manners of the People all about them, could not discern them, and takes no notice of them, although for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable, and deserving his mention) appears by express passages in their Law and holy writings: *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; He hath not dealt so with any nation; and his judgments they have not known them*: 'Tis plainly affirmed, that God did make that discovery of his will and mind peculiarly to that people, and to no other, *I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine*; (saith God to the Jews:) *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth* (saith Moses in his address to God); *Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; The Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth* (saith Moses to that people;) which passages (together with divers others of the same import) being used to engage and encourage a singular obedience, do plainly say, that God transacted with that people singly and separately from all other; taking them (on purpose) as it were, into a corner, at a good distance and beyond hearing of others, that he might there signify alone to them his pleasure, peculiarly concerning them. Yea to this purpose, of maintaining a distance and distinction from the rest of mankind, divers of their laws were appointed; as not only the nature of such laws doth imply, but words annexed to them sometimes express; *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people; ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean*. Whence St. Paul calls their law *μεσότηρον φεγγυμῆς*, a partition wall, that fenced that nation, and severed it from others; and an enmity, being framed to set them in distance and variance from the rest of men. That whole business also of this constitution is frequently styled a covenant, made not between God and mankind, but between God and that single nation; a covenant in formal terms mentioning them, and them only; sealed with marks and characters peculiar to them; requiring conditions and duties possible or proper only for them to perform; exhibiting promises only suitable to them; propounding rewards which they only were capable to receive; and punishments, which they only could undergo. *Hear, O Israel*, is the usual style, according to which those laws are directed, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt*; is the introduction to the Decalogue it self (which among all parts of that law looks fairest towards a general importance and obligation; which yet is so specially directed, and is indeed peculiarly called the covenant between God and that people; viz. *Synecdochically*, as being the principal part directive of their duty.) In the body of the laws it self, there is often made a distinction between them who were bound to observe it, and others that were not; between *brethren* and *strangers*, between *Hebrews* and *Aliens*; with duties suited and limited in regard to that distinction: (as in the cases of *remitting debts*, *releasing servants*, *exacting use*, and the like;) There are enjoined duties which others could not properly, or decently perform; such as observation of Feasts in commemoration and thankfulness for mercies vouchsafed to that Nation; as also others which could not be observed by all men with any possibility or convenience; such as those of repairing thrice a year to one certain place, established for God's worship; of bringing tithes and oblations thither, and the like; neither was the number of *Priests* and *Levites*, set a-part for God's service, proportioned otherwise, than in respect to that one people. The encouragements also and rewards promised to obedience do incommunicably pertain to them, as also the discouragements from and punishments for disobedience; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the Land of *Canaan* was the meed set before them, if they should obey and make good their part of the covenant; a dispossession thereof, or affliction in it, was the punishment threatened, if they should presume to disobey, and violate those engagements: *Ye shall walk in all the Laws, which the Lord your God hath commanded you; that ye may live, and that it may be well with you; and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which ye possess. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it, that it may be well with thee*.

Psal. 147.
Psal. 76. 2.

Levit. 20. 26.

Exod. 33. 16.
They were
not to marry,
not to trade,
to converse,
&c. Vid.
Grot. in E-
vang. p. 130.
Deut. 7. 6.
14. 2.

Levit. 20. 24.

Eph. 2. 14.

Deut. 4. 13.
19. 14. 25.
&c.

Deut. 4. 1.
5. 1. 6. 3.
&c.
Psal. 81. 8.

Deut. 4. 13.
Exod. 34. 28.

Deut. 17. 15.
— 1. 16.
Exod. 25. 46.
Deut. 15. 3, 12.
Levit. 25. 47.
&c.
Deut. 16. 1.
Deut. 16. 16.
14. 21. &c.
Exod. 23. 19.
&c.

Deut. 5. 33.
Deut. 6. 3. &c.

with thee, and that ye may encrease mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey: Such were the promises exciting to obedience, and the threatnings deterring from disobedience were answerable, as every where in their law and story is visible.

I may also hereto add; that as the laws and rites of this Religion were designed only for this People, as they did only agree to their circumstances; so they were only suited to their inclinations, and their capacities; their inclinations, which were very stubborn and perverse; their capacities, which were very low and gross, as their own Prophets do upon many occasions affirm and complain; being dissentaneous and repugnant to the common humour and genius of mankind: so experience discovered them to be, when they became more apparent and observable: *Judeorum mos absurdus, sordidusque*: (The Jewish way of life is uncouth and sordid, was Tacitus his censure, *Hist. V. 5.*) and, They run counter to all men (was St. Paul's imputation on that People, *1 Thess. 2. 15.*) to which the general conceit of men concerning them did agree. So little plausible or probable was their way; so liable to dislike and contempt, which argues it unfit to be commended by the God of wisdom to the generality of mankind.

By which and many other like considerations obvious enough may appear, that this dispensation was not (either according to its nature, or in its design) general, or such as respected the main body of mankind, but rather very particular and restrained; designedly restrained to the oblation and use of one place or people, if compared to the world of men, inconsiderably narrow and small; the fewest of all people God himself says they were. That in fine, this constitution had only the nature of a municipal law, imposing burthens, and indulging privileges upon one City or Territory; not of a common civil sanction, established for the obligation, use and benefit of the whole Commonwealth or Empire subject to the Almighty King.

'Tis not therefore in reason to be taken for such a Revelation, as we argued needful for us, and to be expected from him, who (as the Psalmist, as reason, as experience tells us) is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works; from him, who is the common father of all, and (as St. Paul expresseth it) hath made of one blood *ἑνὸς αἱματος*, the whole nation and commonwealth of mankind; from him, who cannot be in affection any-wise fond or partial; a respecter of persons, or of nations (as St. Paul in the second to the Romans, and St. Peter in the Acts also implies.) From him, who is not only the Maker, but (as our Apostle also styles him) the Saviour of all men; and (as even the Hebrew Wise-man asserts) careth for all alike; being desirous that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; not willing that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance. From him, who is not only *φιλεργός*, or *φιλόλογος*, (a lover of Jews, or of Greeks;) but *φιλόανθρωπος*, a lover of men, and *φιλόψυχος*, a lover of souls; who, lastly, is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, as St. Paul urges this argument; and as also the reason of the thing and the voice of nature doth declare: From this God, I say, so disposed, so related toward us all, so equally concerned in regard to us; so impartial in his affection, so unconfined in his bounty; we should have reason to expect rather no Revelation at all, than one so scant, and pinched in such narrow bounds; so ill proportioned to the glory due to himself, to the need and benefit of mankind. We cannot reasonably imagine that he should contract the effects of his goodness, or the manifestations of his glory, to so slender a parcel of mankind, (no better qualified, no more deserving such special regard, than the rest; as himself to repress their fond conceits, and, probably, in way of anticipation, to intimate his design of farther extending that favour in due season to others, who might pretend thereto with as much right and reason as themselves, doth sometime declare.) That he, who hath freely dispensed the influences of Sun and Stars to all alike, should cause the light of his heavenly truth to shine, as it were, but into one small closet of his spacious house; leaving all the rest, so many stately rooms thereof, encompassed with shades of ignorance and error; that he should pour down the showers of his blessings spiritual (otherwise than he hath done those

*Moses novus
ritus, contra-
riosque cate-
ris mortalibus
indidit. Tac.
Cetera institu-
ta sinistra,
feda pravi-
tate valuerat.*

Deut. 7. 7.

*Psalm. 145. 3.
Acts 17. 26.
The King of
the World,
the Judge of
the earth.
Rom. 2.
Acts 10. 34.
1 Tim. 4. 10.
2. 4.
Wisd. 6. 7.
11, 23, &c.
2 Pet. 3. 9.
Tit. 3. 4.
Sapient. 11.
26.
Rom. 3. 29.
Plat. Theæt.
ὁ θεὸς δεῖξαι
δύναται ἀν-
θρώποις.*

Deut. 9. 4.

Matt. 5. 45.

those natural) upon one only scarce discernible spot of ground; letting all the world beside (like a desert of sand) lie parched with drought, over-spread with desolation and barrenness.

This Revelation therefore was not in this respect sufficient; wanting in its nature and design that due condition of generality and amplitude. But,

2. Farther; As this Revelation was particular, so was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his mind to all, so did he not therein speak out all his mind. Our Apostle

Ἐπὶ τῇ παλαιᾷ νόμῳ ἔκειτο, ὅτε πολλὰ δέκναι πολιτείας, ἢ ἀκρίβεια, ὅτε εἰσαγωγή τῶν δυνάμεων, ὅτε παιδικὰ τὰ παραγγέλματα, ὅτε τὸ γάλα, ὅτε ὁ παιδαγωγός, ὅτε ὁ λύχνος, ὅτε ὁ τύπος, καὶ ἡ σκία. Chryl. Rom. 6. Or. 44.

Heb. 8. 7.
7. 18.

Gal. 3. 21.
ἡ δὲ ζωοποιός.

Rom. 8. 3.
Τὸ ἀδύνατον τῶν νόμων, ἐν ᾧ ἠδύνει.

to the Hebrews chargeth it with blameableness; *εἰ περὶ τοῦ ἀμεμπτοῦ, ἡ πρώτη διαθήκη ἦν ἀμεμπτός;* with imperfection, with weakness, with unprofitableness, *(ἀδύνατος μὲν γὰρ γίνεται προαγωγὸς ἐξολογῆς διὰ τὸ ἀντὶς ἀδυνάτου, καὶ ἀνεργετός. Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐπεδείκνυντο ὁ νόμος. There is made an abolition of the precedent commandment for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: For the law made nothing perfect;)* He means all this in degree and in comparison to what was possible, and in some respects needful. Which charge may be

Heb. 9. 9, 10.

Deut. 27. 26.
Gal. 3. 10.

easily made good (*a priori*) considering both the parts thereof which direct, and those which excite to practice; together with the means and aids enabling, and facilitating obedience to the laws, or rules enjoined; also, (*a posteriori*), if we regard the fruits and effects thereof. Surveying first, I say, the directive part, we may observe, both a redundancy in things circumstantial or exterior, and a defectiveness in things substantial and interior: there be ritual institutions in vast number very nicely described, and strongly pressed; The observation of times and places, the distinction of meats and of habits, (*touch not, taste not, handle not*) corporeal cleansings and purgations; modalities of exterior performance in sacrifices and oblations, those *δικαιοσύνην σαρκὸς* (justifications of the mere flesh, that only concerned the body, or outward man, and could not perfect the observers conscience; could neither satisfy or edify his mind and inward man) we see with extreme punctuality prescribed and enjoined, some of them under very heavy penalties (of utter extermination and excision.) While moral duties (duties of justice and charity, yea of temperance and sobriety in self,) and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and which could not but be much more pleasing to God) were more sparingly delivered in precept, less clearly explained, not so fully urged with rational inducements; nor, in a due proportion guarded with rewards. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitly connived at (as *polygamy*, and *divorce*; some kinds of retaliation, cursing, revenge; some degrees of uncharitableness) which even natural reason dislikes, or condemns. So faulty was that dispensation as to the part thereof directive of life; and it was no less in that part, which promotes and secures good practice, by applying fit excitements to obedience, and fit restraints from disobedience; rightly managing those great instruments and springs of humane activity, natural courage, hope and fear. Nothing so damps mens alacrity in endeavour, as desperation or diffidence of good success; nothing so quickens it as a confidence, or strong presumption thereof: And how then could they be very earnest in endeavours to please God, who were not assured of (yea had so much reason to diffide in) God's placability and readiness (upon repentance) to forgive sins wilfully and presumptuously committed, such as no man surely lives altogether free from? The not opening a door of mercy seems discouraging and apt to slacken performance of duty; what was then the shutting it up close, the bolting it with that iron bar: *Cursed is he, that abides not in all things written in this law to do them?* which at least will exclude assurance, will quash the hopes of mercy; will consequently enervate the sinews of care and industry in serving God. Neither were the rewards of either kind (those that spur'd to obedience, those that stop'd from disobedience) in measure or in kind such as the reason of things doth afford and require. They were only temporal, and chiefly corporeal or sensible; such as belonged to the outward state of this transitory life, which neither can deserve much regard, nor are apt to have great efficacy: for who will in effect, why should any man in reason highly value the

the accommodations of this short and uncertain life? who will, who should be greatly terrified with the inconveniences thereof? whom probably would such considerations sufficiently animate to encounter and sustain the perils, the difficulties, the troubles and the disgraces, to which often the practice of virtue is exposed? whom would they guard from the enchantments of pleasure, profit and honour, alluring men to sin? the pleasures of sense how improper an encouragement; how unworthy a recompence are they for the labours and achievements of virtue? incomparably better surely, more worthy of regard, and more effectual upon man's reason; more apt to produce and to promote real virtue and hearty piety, are the rewards concerning the future state of our immortal soul; which yet 'tis a question whether that law doth ever mention; 'tis plain, it doth not clearly propound and apply them. Indeed as to evident discovery concerning the immortality of man's soul, or the future state (so material a point of Religion, of so grand moment and influence upon practice) even the *Gentile Theology* (assisted by ancient common Tradition) seems to have out-gone the *Jewish*, grounding upon their revealed law; the *Pagan Priests* more expressly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the *Hebrew Prophets*; a plain instance and argument of the imperfection of this Religion.

I subjoin God's not thereby (in an ordinary certain way, according to any pact or promise) affording, or exhibiting such interior influences of grace upon the minds of men; as, considering the natural frailty, blindness and impotency of men, appears necessary to render them obedient to the rules of duty, to guide them in the ways of truth and goodness, to free them from error and sin, to shield and animate them against temptation; is a main defect in that Religion; apt to breed fear in the onset upon duty, to nourish doubt in the performance thereof, to settle despair upon a fall or defeat. It presented to mens eyes the obligation to duty, the difficulty thereof, the danger of transgressing it, but did not openly represent the means requisite to perform it. And what can be more discouraging or discomfoting than to see one's self, upon great peril and penalty, obliged to that, which is apparently very hard, or (considering his strength) impossible, no help to support being visible? especially joining the consideration before touched, that no evasion by pardon, no rise by repentance doth appear. Whence we may well infer, that indeed, in effect, this dispensation was what St. Paul calls it *δανονία θανάτου & δανονία κατακρίσεως* (a ministry of death and condemnation) a subjection to a curse; a killing letter; bearing nothing less in the looks and language thereof, than certain death and unavoidable ruine; (a lying under insupportable slavery both to the guilt and punishment of sin.) *If thou doest ill sin lieth at the door.*

Neither in discouraging thus do we lay any misbecoming imputation upon God, the Author of that Religion; the making so imperfect a Revelation no-wise being disagreeable to his wisdom, his goodness, or his justice. As for a time he might with-hold the declaration of his mind to all mankind, so might he (upon the same or like grounds of wise counsel) forbear to declare some part thereof to that People: no special reason appears that could oblige, that might induce him not to be reserved as well in part to these few men, as in whole to those, all the rest of men; yea, there be good reasons assignable, why the divine wisdom should be then so sparing of its mind, why God should only shew his back parts (as it were) to *Moses*, and not let him see his face; (not discover all of his nature and of his pleasure to him) why then he should seem to delight in, to lay so much stress on those carnal and ceremonious observances; why he should forbear to exact that height of spiritual duty, and not draw men to compliance with the best motives of pure reason. A dawning of light perhaps more became that morning of times, than a meridian brightness; that infancy of the world was not it may be ripe for a more deep and perfect instruction; that Nation however (to whose state, to whose disposition and capacities those laws

*ὅτι πάντα τὰ σαρκικά, καὶ τὰ ὑπερ-
λόγια ἔσθ'· Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 98.
Περὶ ὑπερλίαν ὑδρίαντες λόγῳ τῷ
ἡμῶν μελλόντων μνημῶν, &c. Chryl. ad
Olymp. 6. p. 60. Vid. Tom. 7. p. 161.*

2 Cor. 3. 7, 9.

Gal. 3. 10.

2 Cor. 3. 6.

Gen. 4. 7.

and institutions were adapted) was very unfit for the highest and hardest lessons. For a Nation it was (as from infallible hands we have it) not wise, or considerate; not grave, or constant; not meek, or pliable; but a very stupid and heady, a very fickle and humorous, a very froward and stubborn generation of men; *They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding* (was said of them at first by him, who delivered their law, or rather by God himself who enjoined it.) *And, I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass: I have even from the beginning declared it to thee* (saith the Prophet concerning the house of Jacob: alluding it seems to those many passages in the Law, where they are termed a *stiff-necked people*: incapable thence both of the finest notions and the more rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and the unruliness of their passion they were not *οἱ ἀκούοντες* (*proper auditors*) of a more pure and accurate discipline; wherefore as such the divine wisdom and goodness was pleased to deal with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, condescending to the meanness of their capacities, feeding them with milk, alluring them with pretty shews, scaring them with frightful appearances, indulging them with innocent trifles, pastimes and sports, so tempering his ordinances, as might best serve to keep them in good humour; to draw and entice them easily unto somewhat good, to curb and restrain them from mischief. Whence St. Paul calls those institutions with good reason *elements* (*poor and mean elements, and elements of the world; rudiments of knowledge and discipline*, suited to the capacity of the first age, and the meanest rank; such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn, and able to practise) with good reason he calls the Law a *pedagogue*, that by instilling into those *νηπιοὶ* (those *infants* or little children, so also he terms them) some imperfect notions of truth; by keeping them in some good order did prepare them for a higher instruction, did predispose them toward a better course of life. Indeed, we may easily conceive that such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish and plebeian fancies; but to men of somewhat elevated minds, and well improved reason; of sound judgment, and large experience; who had tasted, and could relish rational entertainments (and such in some measure and comparatively are men generally born and brought up in countrys and places, where civility hath obtained; at least they are capable of being so, fit means being used to render them so) they must needs be insipid and disgusting. In the study of truth, and practice of vertue there are alluring beauties and sweetneses; which it cannot but displease him, who hath seen and felt them, to be diverted from, by an obligation to attend (so precisely) upon such an abundance of petty, circumstantial, exteriour observances; to be forced, I say, to chew such husks of things, to him, who thereby must neglect so delicious kernels, cannot but be grievous and irksome. Wiser men are never much affected with laborious and tedious pomps; they are designed always to amuse children, and the common sort. I add, that this dispensation was suited not only to the childish fancy, but to the slavish spirit of that People; who having in them little of ingenuity, or willingness freely to do good; would be apt to wax not only drowsy and lazy, but sturdy and insolent; had they not been kept under and inured to something of burthen and toil. Such all wise men know to be the proper course of managing people of slavish temper; but toward men of a disposition more ingenuous, tractable and free (such as commonly men civilized, and well governed are or may become) such a proceeding were incongruous; they will either refuse to undergo such unnecessary burthens, or bear them unwillingly; their obedience will be none, or lame, or unkindly and heartless. God therefore dealt according to wisdom with the *Jews*, when he imposed such burthens upon their shoulders; when he pinched their stiff necks with such yokes, when he detained them in such fetters; (so they were, and so they are truly called by our Apostles; burthens intollerably heavy; yokes very galling and vexatious; fetters very strait and grievous; which they reasonably therefore reckon it a very valuable privilege and benefit, purchased by our Saviour for us, to be loosed from)

Deut. 32. 28.
Vid. Jer. 4.
22. 5. 4.
Neh. 9.
IIa. 48. 4.

Deut. 31. 27.
Exod. 32. 9.
Deut. 9. 6,
13, &c.
Vid. Psal. 78.
36, 57.

Gal. 4. 9. 3.

Gal. 3. 24.

Gal. 4. 9.

Acts 15. 10,
28.
Gal. 5. 1.
Gal. 3. 23.

from) but such a dispensation could not be convenient for the rational nature in common and for perpetuity; it neither becomes God himself, who will not without need or profit vex his creatures; who cannot be fully satisfied with performances of so mean a sort; who necessarily doth affect services of a more excellent nature and importance (those spiritual services of love, reverence and gratitude; of purity, righteousness and goodness:) It doth not sute man, not being apt to perfect his nature, not being able to satisfy his mind. As he, by the improvement and use of his reason, will easily discern the small worth of such performances, so will he not readily comply with them without regret; but will soon apprehend the matter to be indeed, as St. Paul represents it, that an obligation to such rites is a *bond against us*, (*ἐξαιτίας τῶ κατ' ἡμῶν χειρὸς* Coloss. 2. 1. *γεγραπτοῦ τοῖς ὀφειλόμενοι, ὃ ὑπο ἰσχυραντίον ἡμῶν*) which in reason he may expect to be wiped out and *cancelled*; that a law consisting of such precepts hath an *enmity* Gal. 3. 24. or repugnance to his nature; that such a dispensation is a *pupillage* and a *slavery* Gal. 4. 3, 5; *ἑσ.* which he earnestly must desire to be redeemed and mancipiated from.

Thus doth this Revelation upon many respects, grounded on the very intrinsic nature thereof, appear partial and imperfect; and consequently not such as that, which we reasonably may expect from the divine wisdom and goodness.

'Tis true (which some may deem an objection against our discourse, but I should rather take for a good confirmation thereof) that God did afterward annex some labels (as it were) to this deed; that he imparted by degrees farther manifestations of light and grace to that people by the instructions, and by the exemplary practices of prophets and holy men raised up among them by his especial instinct and order; in a manner and upon occasions extraordinary. The Prophets frequently declared, that God had not much delight in those ceremonious observances, nor would accept them otherwise than as proceeding from good dispositions of mind, and as accompanied with practices of moral duty and more spiritual piety; that he chiefly did require of them hearty reverence toward himself, and submission to his will; strict justice and tender charity toward their neighbours; meekness and patience in their behaviour; temperance and sobriety in all their conversation. By them also he discovered more of his gracious disposition, and of his merciful intentions toward them; that he would not be extremely rigorous in punishing the transgressions of his law; that he would not refuse pardon to the most grievous sins, not remain irreconcilable toward the most hainous offenders, upon their sincere repentance and amendment of life. By the practices of holy men he also shewed, that the rigour of that ceremonious law was mitigable; that in some cases its obligation might be relaxed, and its observance dispensed with; that a service more refined and rational was especially acceptable to God; that he loved a purer devotion, a perfecter righteousness, a higher charity than such as the letter of their law prescribed. By them also he intimated (which their devotions plainly infer) that he not only exacted such duties, but was ready to afford them his assistance to the performing them; by teaching and admonishing them within; enlightning their minds, and enflaming their affections; directing, exciting, and quickning them to obedience. Thus did that morning of divine knowledge, from the first dawning, by degrees grow more light-some; yet never arrived to a perfect daylight; the shadows were not quite dispersed; the whole *horizon* of heavenly truth was not disclosed thereby. Even those arbitrary and extraordinary dispensations of farther instruction are so many good arguments, that God did not primarily intend the *Jewish* Law for a complete delivery of his mind; his reserving so much to be upon occasion detected, implied, that more still might rest behind; accordingly as indeed we see, that the future state, and immortality it self, was not by the Prophets fully brought to light; that the better covenant, established upon better assurances, was not yet revealed; that all means requisite for the glory of God, for the good of man, were not throughly provided for.

Of which conclusion we shall add this one further probation, that *Judaism* did not serve (in effect) sufficiently to better mens lives; to qualify a competent number of men for God's favour, or for their own happiness; by disposing their

their minds to any tolerable degree of true sanctity, piety, and righteousness acceptable to God, profitable to humane society, perfective of man's nature. 'Tis a point that St. Paul in his *Epistle to the Romans* insisteth much upon, and excellently applies to this same purpose: The Jews were highly conceited of their way, scorning the rest of men as altogether ignorant of God's will, and incapable of his favour; but St. Paul represses their arrogance, by shewing the difference was not so great (as they imagined) between them and others, not even in those respects; for that the special revelation, which they were so proud of, had not produced effects considerably better in them, than the light of reason and the law of nature (means so despicable in their esteem) had brought forth in others: Which charge being made good, 'tis evident they had no reason to prize their way so much, or to confide therein, as perfect; as thoroughly, in the best manner, and in reasonable measure, sufficient to qualify them for God's favour, or to bring them into a state of happiness; (yea 'tis plain, upon that supposition, in some respects their way had the disadvantage, and made their condition worse than that of other men; rendring their faults more grievous and inexcusable, more provoking God's displeasure against them; especially seeing, upon the tenour of their Religion, they had scarce any better ground to presume of pardon or impunity, than other men had from instincts of nature, from rational conjecture. Now that such a charge upon them is no slander, we need no other probations than what the continual stream of their own Histories doth represent concerning their manners; than the many full and plain testimonies of their own Prophets concerning them; than the extreme punishments by divine justice inflicted upon them; than the common reputation they have continually had among men, grounded upon experience. What is their history but one continued tragedy, as it were, setting out the various strange rebellions and apostasies of that people, with the miserable consequences proceeding from them? what do their prophetic writings contain beside pathetical exhortations, severe reproofs, dreadful comminations of Judgment upon them, for their prodigious impieties, iniquities and lewdnesses; general in extension over all persons, excessive in degree, by no means curable or corrigible? Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem (Hierusalem, that place of universal concourse, the heart of that nation, the special seat and sanctuary of their religion) see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it (says Jeremy 5. 1.) There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof (of Hierusalem) like a roaring lion ravening the prey: Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; her princes are like wolves; the people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery: and I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none, saith Ezekiel: And the rest frequently harp upon the same string. But these Prophets, you'll say, lived in unhappy times; so circumstantiated, that no religion could have much prevailed upon mens minds and lives; such as make every religion liable to the same exceptions: Well, but Isaiah, one would think, lived in better times; for how many better Kings had that Nation (that more strictly practised or earnestly promoted piety) than Hezekiah? yet, it seems, even then; the land was defiled under the inhabitants thereof; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head there was no soundness in the body of that nation. Yea, when did that religion flourish in greater vigour and strength, when had it more advantage of exerting its best virtue, than in the peaceful and prosperous times of that great and mighty, that good and zealously pious Prince, King David? yet even in his reign, according to his own observation and testimony, they were (generally) corrupt, and did abominable works; they all were gone aside, and were altogether become filthy; there was none that did good, no not one. But we need not urge particular instances, since we have it so often affirmed in gross, that the manners of that people, from first to last, were constantly naught and offensive to God: The children of Israel, and the children of Judah (saith God him-

Rom. 2.

Jer. 5. 1.

Ezek. 22.

Isa. 1. 5, 6.

Psal. 14. 53.

Jer. 32. 30.

himself in *Jeremy*) have only done evil before me from their youth. And again; Since *Jer. 7. 25.*
the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have *Jer. 16. 12.*
even sent you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them; *—11. 7.*
yet they hearkened not unto me. The law, although by extraordinary persons,
in fittest opportunities, with utmost vehemence and diligence inculcated and
urged upon them, proved continually ineffectual to produce the fruits of piety
and righteousness. The same you may see confessed by *Ezra*; and not only ac- *Ezra 9. 7.*
knowledge, but evidently demonstrated by *Nehemiah* in a punctual narra- *Neh. 9.*
tion, deduced from the beginning to his time; (in the ninth chapter of that
Book.) Again; The heavy calamities by divine justice so often inflicted, so
long continued upon them; and at last God's so visible utter dereliction and
disowning them, do also sufficiently declare what their deserts, and what their
qualities have been; as also what good may ever be expected from them. For
as God never punishes grievously without a proportionate cause, so he never
quite deserts, but in a desperate case, when no competent emendation may be
expected. He is not wont to lop off the branches, but when they grow dead and
barren; he never cuts down the tree, while there is any hope of fruit. This
providence therefore toward that people shews, that in God's esteem, that law
is to be laid aside, as an instrument grown useless, and unfit for his purposes;
unfit to serve his glory, to further mens good.

I add; That through all course of times their manners have not procured
in a manner from any men any good-will, or respect; but indeed the common
dislike, contempt and hatred of men: they have always (since well known
and observed in the world) been reputed a sort of people not only above all men
vain and superstitious, addicted to fond conceits and fabulous stories, but ex-
tremely proud and arrogant, churlish and squire, ill-natured and false-hearted
toward all men; not good or kind, yea not so much as just or true toward any
but themselves:

*(Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos;*

*Juven. Sat.
14.*

*Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile
odium.)*

*Tac. V. pag.
621.
Vid. Grot. de
Jure B. 9. lib.
II. 15.*

Such are the obvious characters of them, such were their humours noted to be;
humours, not only implausible, but really blameable, deservedly offensive and
odious; being contrary to the common sense, to the natural ingenuity of man.
They have been long, as we see them now to be, partly for the vanity of their
conceits, partly for the baseness of their minds and manners, and partly also
for the wretchedness of their condition, the scorn and obloquy of all Nations.

Now the tree, which hath always bore such fruits (so unfavoury, so un-
wholesome) we have no reason to admire, to esteem excellent and perfect: It
might be good for those times, when men willingly did feed on acorns, on crabs,
on bramble-berries; but cannot so well serve now, when higher improve-
ments of reason, when philosophy and learning by a general influence upon
the world have prepared the palates of men to relish, their stomachs to digest
more delicious and more wholesome fare. But I

3. Proceed to shew the third defect, which I at first observed, in this Reli-
gion, that it was not designed for perpetual obligation and use: (As it was
particular in respect of the persons, to whom it was directed, whom it obliged;
as it was partial and incomplete in its frame, so it was, according to its de-
sign, temporary and mutable.) This conclusion we might infer from what
hath been said concerning the narrow extent, and concerning the intrinsick
imperfection thereof; for supposing a new general and perfect revelation made
to mankind, (such as we asserted probably should be) that would naturally
swallow and void those which are particular and imperfect; as comprehending
them, it would render them useless; as supplying the defects, correcting the
defaults, or removing, paring away the superfluities of them, it would disco-
ver them unfit for continuance. As rivers run into the Sea, as shadows flee
before

- before the Sun, so these small and shallow, these dusky and faint revelations would discharge themselves into, would vanish before a complete and universal one. Nothing in nature, or in providence, that is scant or defectuous, can be stable and lasting. Thus, I say, is this a conclusion, a consequence of those which preceded; but we have another more convincing sort of evidence to prove it by (most valid *ad homines*) even by many pregnant intimations; yea many express remonstrances and predictions, that God did intend in due time to introduce a great change in affairs of this kind; to refine and reform the state of things; to break open those inclosures, and to remove those bars of separation; to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, and to receive all nations into the fold of his most special care and love: In fine, that he would dispense a general full revelation of his mind and will, of his grace and favour to mankind; such as should not be consistent with that particular and partial law, such as implies a disannulling thereof for obligation, and disabling it for use.
- Mal. 3. 1, 3. Heb. 9. 10. The holy writings of that people acquaint us, that God intended to raise up another Prophet (for extraordinariness and eminency) like to Moses, which should have words by God put into his mouth (new words surely, new revelations from God; for why should he with that solemnity be sent to utter stale matters?) whom they should, upon peril of their lives and welfare, be particularly obliged to hearken (that is, to yield attention and obedience) unto. That the days should come, when the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, different from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt; not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon mens hearts; in regard to which passage we may with the Apostle to the Hebrews well argue: If the first had been faultless, and designed to abide in force, there would have been no place found for the second; and that, by speaking of a new covenant, he antiquated (or declared his intention to antiquate) the old one.
- Deut. 18. 15. Acts 3. 23. Jer. 31. 31. Heb. 8. 7, 13. Jer. 3. 16. That time should be, when they should say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither should it come to mind, neither should they remember it, neither should they visit it; they are the words of the Prophet Jeremy, concerning better times to come; wherein God should give them pastors according to his own heart, which should feed them with knowledge and understanding; but in a way, 'tis evident, altogether different from the Jewish institution; without any regard to the ark of their covenant, that seat and emblem of God's especial presence among them.
- Psal. 110. 4. That another priesthood should infallibly (for God swore so much) be established, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedeck (not appointed to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions.)
- Isa. 66. 18, 21. That time should be, when God would gather all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory; and out of them God would take (that which the Mosaical constitution would not any-wise permit) for Priests, and for Levites.
- Psal. 132. 13. Mich. 4. 1, 2, 7, &c. Joel 2. 28. 3. 16. That there should appear a Sion; a mountain seated above all mountains (visible and conspicuous to all the world) wherein God would place his perpetual residence (the seat of his worship, of his especial presence and influence) to which all nations should flow (or willingly resort) to learn God's will, and walk in his ways; (which Sion could not be that literal one, long since desolated and disregarded; and which however, did it stand in repute, could be no convenient receptacle, or resort, for all the world; 'tis surely another spiritual Sion, or mystical rock, which is prophesied of.)
- Isa. 65. 17. 66. 22. That God will create new heavens, and a new earth; (a thoroughly new world, or new state of things;) such as that the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind.
- Joel 2. 28. That God would pour his spirit of Prophecy upon all flesh; (although we see the prophetic spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation, not so much as any pretence thereto remaining.) That the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; (Judaism surely is not this knowledge, which never did, nor is ever likely to fill the earth.) That from the rising of the sun, to the going down thereof, God's name should be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense should be offered unto his name, and a pure offering; (In every place incense, acceptable to God, should be offered; not

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not only at Hierusalem, to which the Jewish service was confined.) That a time was determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sins; to make a reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Dan. 9. 24.

That God would send him, so much needed and desired by all nations to whom the gathering of the people should be; the Sun of righteousness, arising with salvation in his wings; the Redeemer that should come to Sion; the Messenger of the covenant; whom God would give for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth; to cause to inherit the desolate heritage; the righteous branch, to be raised up unto David; to reign and prosper, executing judgment and justice in the earth; whose name should be called, the Lord our Righteousness; whom God would anoint to preach good tidings to the meek, and bind up the broken-hearted, &c. that is, in fine, God in due time would send the *Messias*, to enlighten the world with a perfect instruction; to reveal God's will, and declare his mercy to mankind; to erect an universal spiritual kingdom in the minds and hearts of men, reducing them to fuller knowledge, and to better obedience of God. These places of Scripture (to which many others might be added) do sufficiently evince, that the *Mosaic* dispensation was in the design thereof mutable and transitory; that God intended what the Apostle affirms effected by our Saviour, an abrogation of the precedent command for its weakness and unprofitableness. Hag. 2. 7. Gen. 49. 10. Mal. 1. 3. 4. 2. Isa. 59. 20. 49. 8. 61. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Heb. 7. 18.

Thus doth God's design concerning the abolition of this Religion appear by verbal testimonies; the same we see also declared by real effects: his providence hath made good his word, he hath not only disobliterated men from that Religion, but hath manifestly discountenanced it; yea hath disabled even the most obstinate adherents in opinion and will thereto, from the practice and exercise thereof, according to its primitive rules and prescriptions. Long is it (for above fifteen hundred years) since they, exiled from their ancient country, and scattered over the world, have wanted a place whither to resort, wherein to perform those most weighty parts of worship and service to God, oblation of sacrifices, incense and tithes: Their Tribes being confounded, the distinction of priesthood and people seems taken away; all the mysterious emblems of God's special presence, all the tokens of God's favour and endearment to them are embezzled and quite lost; nothing is left substantial or solemn in their Religion, which if they would they could put in practice: all that they retain of their ancient institution is the observation of some petty formalities, in matters of less importance; which also they have so blended and corrupted with impure mixtures of their own device and forgery, (false and impious opinions, ridiculous and uncouth ceremonies, idle and absurd stories) that we may justly suppose genuine *Judaism* no where to be found; that it cannot be, nor is indeed any where practised.

So that what reason shewed fit to be, what God had declared should be, that experience doth attest to be done; the cessation and abolition of that way of Religion, both as to obligation and use.

So I pass over this second step of my intended discourse; That no other Religion, excepting Christianity, which hath been, or is in being, can reasonably pretend to have proceeded from God, as an universal, complete and final declaration of his mind and will to mankind. Such as we argued it probable that so wise a God, so just a Lord, so gracious a father, would sometime afford to his poor miserable creatures and children, the sons of *Adam*.

I have two great steps yet to take; One, that Christianity is in it self a doctrine and law endowed with the fore-mentioned conditions; in all respects worthy to come from God, apt to promote his glory, and procure man's benefit. Another, that it *de facto* did proceed from God, was attested to by him, and established by his authority. Which propositions I shall hereafter by God's grace endeavour to prove.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVI.

OF THE EXCELLENCY OF THE Christian Religion.

1 COR. II. 6.

We speak wisdom to those which are perfect.

THE meaning of these words (upon viewing the context, and weighing the scope of St. Paul's discourse) I take to be in effect this; That however such parts of the Christian doctrine, which St. Paul discovered unto those, whom he began to instruct therein, (*the milk which he gave the babes in Christ to drink*) especially as propounded, proved and persuaded in so plain and simple a manner, without advantages of subtle reasoning or elegant language, might seem to persons really ignorant, unskilful, and dull of apprehension (although much conceited of their own knowledge, wit and reach) or to men prepossessed with contrary notions, and corrupt affections, to be foolish and unreasonable: Yet that the whole doctrine, such as it is in it self, being entirely disclosed unto *perfect men* (that is, to men of an adult and improved understanding, well disposed and capable, void of prejudicate conceits, and cleansed from vicious dispositions) would appear *wisdom*; wisdom, that is not only exactly true, but highly important, and very well suited to the attainment of the best ends; even those ends, which it pretendeth to bring about, which are manifestly the most excellent that any knowledge can aim at; the glorifying of God, and salvation of man: this I suppose to be St. Paul's assertion here; and thereof it is my intent, by God's assistance, to endeavour now some declaration and proof, by representing briefly some peculiar excellencies and perfections of our Religion; which may serve to evince the truth, and evidence the wisdom thereof; to make good, that indeed our Religion well deserveth the privilege it doth claim of a divine extraction, that it is not an invention of man, but (as St. Paul calleth it) *the wisdom of God*, proceeding

1 Cor. 3. 1, 2.

1 Cor. 2. 7.

ceeding from no other Author, but the God of truth and wisdom. It is indeed a common subject, and so the best ever should be; it is always profitable, and now seasonable, to inculcate it, for the confirmation of our selves, and conviction of others, in this Age of wavering and warping toward infidelity; wherefore regarding more the real usefulness of the matter, than the squeamish fancy of some auditors, I shall without scruple propound what my own meditation hath suggested about it.

1. The first excellency peculiar to the Christian doctrine I observe to be this; that it assigneth a true, proper and complete character or notion of God (complete I mean, not absolutely, but in respect to our condition and capacity) such a notion as agreeth thoroughly with what the best reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, ancient tradition doth attest, and common experience doth intimate concerning God; such a character as is apt to breed highest love and reverence in mens hearts toward him, to engage them in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him: it ascribeth unto him all conceivable perfections of nature in the highest degree, it asserteth unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, it commendeth and justifieth to us all his actions and proceedings. For in his Essence it representeth him One, Eternal, perfectly simple and pure, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Independent, Impassible and Immutable; as also, according to his essential disposition of Will and natural manner of acting, most absolute and free, most good and benign, most holy and just, most veracious and constant; it acknowledgeth him the maker and upholder of all Beings, of what nature and what degree soever; both material and immaterial, visible and invisible; it attributeth to him Supreme majesty and authority over all: It informeth us, that he framed this visible world with especial regard to our use and benefit, that he preserveth it with the same gracious respect; that he governeth us with a particular care and providence; viewing all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to good ends, general or particular. It declareth him in his dealings with rational creatures very tender and careful of their good, exceedingly beneficent and merciful toward them, compassionate of their evils, placable for their offences, accessible and inclinable to help them at their entreaty, or in their need; yet no-wise fond, or indulgent to them; not enduring them to proceed in perverse or wanton courses; but impartially just, and inflexibly severe toward all iniquity obstinately pursued; it, in short, describeth him most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence: whatever perfections in essence, state or practice, either Philosophers (by rational collection from innate notions, or from contemplation of natural effects, or upon observing occurrences in humane affairs) or other institutions from the reliques of primitive tradition, by politick reflection upon things, from other fountains, or by other means whatever, have by parts (imperfectly, obscurely and faintly) attributed to God; all those our Religion in a full, clear and peremptory manner, with advantage beyond what I can express, doth ascribe and assert unto him; not intermixing therewith (as other doctrines and institutions may be observed to do) any thing unworthy of him, or misbecoming him; adjoining nothing repugnant to that which natural light discerneth or approveth; but shewing somewhat beyond what it can descry, concerning God's incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence, his unfearchable counsels of wisdom, his admirable methods of providence, whereby he hath designed to commend his goodness to us, and to glorify his justice; which sorts of truths exceeding man's reach to devise or comprehend as it becometh God (who so far transcendeth us in wisdom and knowledge) to reveal them, so they wondrously conspiring with the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us, do argue or confirm the divinity of the doctrine, which acquainteth us with them: For a doctrine, how plausible soever, which should teach us nothing about God; that by other means could not be found out, and whose bottom common sense might not fathom, there were no urgent cause why we should derive it from heaven, or why we should not rather deem it the invention of some witty or subtle man. But such a doctrine

Matt. 11. 26.
— Neither
knoweth any
man the Fa-
ther, save the
son, and he to
whomsoever
the son will
reveal him.

as this (which as it telleth us nothing about divine things, that contradicteth reason, so it informeth us many things, which no understanding of man had ever conceived, none can penetrate) we may justly presume to come from a superiour wisdom, we must at least avow it worthy of God; in the contrivances of man's wit or fancy about things of this nature (as in divers instances it hath happened) most probably many flaws and incongruities presently would have appeared; they would have clashed with themselves, or with the dictates of common reason: that, for instance, God should out of his own bosom send down his eternal Son to partake of our nature, and appear in our flesh, that with utmost advantage he might discover God's will and merciful intentions toward us, that he might set before us an exact pattern of good life; that by his obedience and patience he might expiate our sin, and reconcile God to mankind; that he might raise in us a hope of, and lead us in the way to happiness; this indeed is a mystery, and a depth of wisdom, which we should never have thought of, nor can yet thoroughly sound by thinking, which we better may admire, than we can understand; but neither doth good reason disallow it, nor can disprove it; yea good reason so far confirmeth it, as it cannot but admit it to import nothing but that which is plainly true and most credible, the immense goodness and justice of God; concerning which nothing ought to seem strange or uncouth to us, since even by the care expressed in matters of ordinary providence divine goodness appeareth so unaccountably vast and high, that upon consideration thereof worthily might Job and the Psalmist exclaim; *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him, and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him!*

Job 7. 17.

Psalm 144. 3.

Now thus to instill into the minds of men a right and worthy notion of God, is palpably a great excellency of any doctrine or Religion: for beside that a true knowledge of God, (even barely considered as in way of theory most perfective of our understanding, it being conversant upon the noblest object of contemplation) is in it self very desirable; and upon the same ground error in divine things is no small evil or defect; both these, such knowledge and such error respectively, are very considerable, as having a powerful influence upon action; for according to mens conceptions about God is their practice, religious and moral, very much regulated; if men conceive well of God, they will be guided and moved thereby to render him a worship and an obedience worthy of him, and acceptable to him; if they are ignorant of him, or mistake about him, they will accordingly perform services to him, or pretences of service, which shall neither become him, nor please him; (God by such misconceptions being transformed into an idol, their religion will become vile or vain superstition.) And since all men apprehend the example of God a perfect rule of action, that they cannot do better than to resemble and imitate him, such as they conceive God to be, such in good measure they will endeavour to be themselves, both in their disposition and demeanour; whence infallibly the virtues and defects which lie in their notion, will exert and diffuse themselves into their life.

Ila. 66. 3.

I. 13, 14.

Εὐλόγως τοῖς
μὲν μοχθηροῖς
παύλας ἔχον
τὰς πλεῖστας
διαπονήσας ἀ-
νάγκην, τοῖς δ'
ἀνιδίοις ἀει-
σας. Clem.
Strom. 7.
(pag. 511.)

2. A second great excellency, peculiar to the Christian institution is this, that it faithfully informeth us concerning our selves, concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state past, present and final; points about which otherwise by no reason, no history, no experience we could be well resolved or satisfied: it teacheth us that we consist of a frail mortal body, taken from the earth and fashioned by God's hand; and of an immortal spirit derived from heaven, and breathed out of God's mouth, whereby we understand the dignity of our nature, and nobleness of our descent, our near alliance, and our great obligation to God; and consequently how it concerneth us to behave our selves both in regard to God, and toward our selves, in a manner answerable to such a relation, worthy of such an high birth and quality: it sheweth us, that we were originally designed by a voluntary obedience to glorify our Maker, and in so doing to partake of joy and felicity from him; that accordingly we were created in a state agreeable to those purpo-

purposes, wherein we were fit to serve God, and capable thereby ever to continue happy: but that by our unworthy distrust and wilful disobedience we cast our selves from thence, and laps'd into this wretched state of inward blindness, error and disorder, of outward frailty, sorrow and trouble: it acquainteth us farther, how being thus estrang'd from God, and expos'd to the effects of his just displeasure, we are yet again by his exceeding mercy and favour put into a capacity of recovering our selves, of being re-instated in a condition happy far beyond that, from which we fell, by returning unto God, and complying with his will declared unto us; as also how continuing obstinately in our degeneracy and disobedience we shall assuredly plunge our selves deeper into an abyss of endless misery: it fully representeth unto us, what shall be our future state and final doom, how it shall be suited to our demeanours and deserts in this life, what a strict trial, what a severe judgment all our actions (even our passant words, and our secret thoughts) must hereafter undergo, and how upon the result we shall become either exceedingly happy, or extremely miserable for ever. It is indeed this Doctrine only, which fully resolveth us about this weighty inquiry, which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much irresolution exercised Philosophers, wherein the final End and Happiness of man consisteth, and what is the way of attaining it; assuring us, that it consisteth not in any of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all, but in the favour and the enjoyment of God, with the blessings flowing thence; that this happiness is only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's holy laws, or by the practice of such a piety and such a vertue which this doctrine prescribeth, to be obtained: These most important truths so useful both for the satisfaction of our minds, and the direction of our lives, this doctrine unfoldeth; I call them truths, and that really they are such even their harmony and consistence between themselves, their consonancy with inferences from all sorts of principles, which we can apply for learning of truth, with what about these matters reason collecteth, tradition reporteth, experience doth imply, may well persuade us: for that man was first made and constituted in a happy state, that he was for his misbehaviour detruded thence; that hence he is become so very prone to vice, and so much subject to pain, that our souls do abide after death, that after this life there shall be a reckoning and judgment, according to which good men (who here are often much afflicted) shall be rewarded with joy, and bad men (who commonly prosper here) shall be requited with pain, the wisest men upon these grounds, always have surmized; and their rational conjectures our Religion with a positive and expresse assertion doth establish. So great a light doth it afford (which is no small perfection thereof) to the knowledge of our selves, and our chief concernments, the objects next to God, and what concerneth him, best deserving our inquiry and information.

3. It is a peculiar excellency of our Religion, that it prescribeth an accurate rule of life, most congruous to reason, and suitable to our nature; most conducible to our welfare, and our content; most apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the publick benefit of all; by the strict observance whereof we shall do what is worthy of our selves and most becoming us, yea shall advance our nature above it self into a resemblance of the divine nature; we shall do God right and obtain his favour, we shall oblige and benefit men, acquiring withall good-will and good respect from them, we shall purchase to our selves all the conveniences of a sober life, and all the comforts of a good conscience; For if we first examine the precepts directive of our practice in relation to God, what can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are those duties of piety, which our Religion doth enjoin? what can be more fit, than that we should most highly esteem and honour him, who is most excellent? that we should bear most hearty affection to him, who is in himself most good, and most beneficial to us? that we should have a most awful dread of him, who is so infinitely powerful, holy and just? that we should be very grateful unto him from whom we have received our being, with all the comforts and

*As ye have
received of us
how ye ought
to walk, and
to please God.
1 Thell. 4. 1.*

conveniences thereof? that we should entirely trust, and hope in him, who can do what he will, and will do whatever in reason we can expect from his goodness, and can never fail to perform what he hath promised? that we should render all obedience and observance to him, whose children, whose servants, whose subjects we are born; by whose protection and provision we enjoy our life and livelihood? Can there be a higher privilege than liberty of access, with assurance of being favourably received, in our needs to him, who is thoroughly able to supply them? Can we desire upon easier terms to receive benefits, than by acknowledging our wants, and asking for them? Can there be required a more gentle satisfaction from us for our offences, than confession of them, accompanied with repentance and effectual resolution to amend? Is it not in fine most equal and fair, that we should be obliged to promote his glory, who hath obliged himself to further our good? The practice of such a piety as it is apparently λογική λατρεία (*a reasonable service*) so it cannot but produce excellent fruits of advantage to our selves, a joyful peace of conscience, and a comfortable hope, a freedom from all superstitious terrors and scruples, from all tormenting cares and anxieties; it cannot but draw down from God's bountiful hands showers of blessings upon our heads, and of joys into our hearts; whence our obligation to these duties is not only reasonable, but very desirable.

Am. Marc.
l. 22.

Consider we next the precepts by which our Religion doth regulate our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren (so it styleth all men, intimating thence the duties it requireth us to perform toward them) and what directions in that kind can be imagined comparably so good, so useful as those which the Gospel affordeth? An honest Pagan Historian saith of the Christian Profession, that *nil nisi justum suadet & bene*; the which is a true, though not full character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we should sincerely and tenderly love one another, should earnestly desire and delight in each others good, should heartily sympathize with all the evils and sorrows of our brethren, should be ready to yield them all the help and comfort we are able, being willing to part with our substance, our ease, our pleasure for their benefit or succour; not confining this our charity to any sorts of men, particularly related or affected toward us, but in conformity to our heavenly father's boundless goodness extending it to all; that we should mutually bear one anothers burthens, and bear with one anothers infirmities, mildly resent and freely remit all injuries, all discourtesies done unto us retaining no grudge in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting them with good wishes and good deeds. It chargeth us to be quiet and orderly in our stations, diligent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright in our dealings, observant of our relations, obedient and respectful towards our superiours, meek and gentle to our inferiours; modest and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our conversation, candid and benign in our censures, innocent and inoffensive, yea courteous and obliging in all our behaviour toward all persons. It commandeth us to root out of our hearts all spite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtiness, all evil suspicion and jealousy; to restrain our tongue from all slander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harsh language; to banish from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt, may needlessly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the publick good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our ease or pleasure; rather discarding a less good from our selves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or estimate the benefits that spring from the practice of these duties, either to the man that observeth them, or to all men in common? O divinest Christian charity, what tongue can worthily describe thy most heavenly beauty, thy incomparable sweetness, thy

Τοιαύτη δὲ ἡ ἀγάπη δύναμις τῆς
ἐκ πλαύσαντος τοῦ πλάσαντος ἐξί-
σης ποιεῖ χάριν, κατὰ τὰ τοῦ πλη-
σίου ἀγάδ' ἀποδοσά τοιζεν. Chrys.
An. 19.

more than royal clemency and bounty? how nobly dost thou enlarge our mind beyond the narrow sphere of self and private regard into an universal care and complacence, making every man our self, and all concerns to be ours? how dost thou entitle us unto, how dost thou invest us in all

all the goods imaginable; dost enrich us with the wealth, dost prefer us with the honour, dost adorn us with the wisdom and the virtue, dost bless us with all prosperity of the world, whilst all our neighbours good by our rejoicing therein becometh our own? how dost thou raise a man above the reach of all mischiefs and disasters, of all troubles and griefs, since nothing can disturb or discompose that soul, wherein thou dost constantly reside, and absolutely reign? how easily dost thou without pain or hazard, without drawing blood or striking stroke, render him that enjoyeth thee an absolute conquerour over all his foes, triumphant over all injuries without, and all passions within; for that he can have no enemy, who will be a friend to all, and nothing is able to cross him, who is disposed to take every thing well? how sociable, how secure, how pleasant a life might we lead under thy kindly governance? what numberless sorrows and troubles, fears and suspicions, cares and distractions of mind at home, what tumults and tragedies abroad might be prevented, if men would but hearken to thy mild suggestions? what a paradise would this world then become, in comparison to what it now is, where thy good precepts and advices being neglected, uncharitable passions and unjust desires are predominant? how excellent then is that doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven, and (would but men embrace thee) the peace and joy of heaven with thee?

If we farther survey the laws and directions which our Religion prescribeth concerning the particular management of our souls and bodies in their respective actions and enjoyments, we shall also find, that nothing could be devised more worthy of us, more agreeable to reason, more productive of our welfare and our content. It obligeth us to preserve unto our reason its natural prerogative, or due empire in our souls, and over our bodies, not to suffer the brutish part to usurp and domineer over us; that we be not swayed down by this earthly lump, not enslaved to bodily temper, not transported with tumultuary humours, not deluded by vain fancy; that neither inward propensions, nor impressions from without be able to seduce us to that which is unworthy of us, or mischievous to us. It enjoyneth us to have sober and moderate thoughts concerning our selves, sutable to our total dependance upon God, to our natural meanness and weakness, to our sinful inclinations, to the guilt we have contracted in our lives; that therefore we be not puffed up with self-conceit, or vain confidence in our selves, or in any thing about us (any wealth, honour or prosperity.) It directeth us also to compose our minds into a calm, serene and chearful state; that we be not easily distempered with anger, or distracted with care, or over-borne with grief, or disturbed with any accident befalling us; but that we be content in every condition, and entertain patiently all events, yea accept joyfully from God's hand whatever he reacheth to us. It commandeth us to restrain our appetites, to be temperate in all our enjoyments, to abstain from all irregular pleasures, which are base in kind, or excessive in degree; which may corrupt our minds, or impair our health, or endamage our estate, or stain our good name, or prejudice our peace and repose: it doth not prohibit us the use of any creature, whence we may receive innocent convenience or delight, but indulgeth us a prudent and sober use of them all, with the sense of God's goodness, and thankfulness to him, who bestoweth them upon us. Our Religion also farther ordereth us (so far as our necessary occasions or duties permit) to sequester and elevate our minds from these low and transitory things, from the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; things indeed unworthy the attention, unworthy the affection of an heaven-born and immortal spirit; that we should fix our thoughts, our desires, our endeavours upon objects most worthy of them, objects high and heavenly, pure and spiritual, infinitely stable and durable: *Not to love the world, and the things therein; to be careful for nothing, but to cast all our care upon God's providence; not to labour for the meat that perisheth, not to trust in uncertain riches; to have our treasure, our heart, our hope, our conversation above in heaven; such directions our Religion prescribeth, by compliance with which, if man be at all capable of being happy, assuredly his*
happi-

happinefs must be attained; for that no present enjoyment can render a man happy, all experience proclaimeth; the restless motions we continually see, the woful complaints we daily hear, do manifestly demonstrate.

And who seeth not the great benefits and the goodly fruits accruing from observance of these laws and rules? who discerneth not the admirable consent of all these particular injunctions in our Religion with that general one,

Vid. Grot. de
Ver. 4. 12.
Phil. 4. 8.

Whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue or any praise, that we should mind such things, and practise them? Such, and far more excellent than I am able to describe,

* Τί ἂν τις εἴποι ὅτι περὶ ἀγαθῶν τῶν φιλοσοφῶν, ὅτι ὑψηλῶν νόμων τῶν ἀρετῶν, ὅτι ἀγαθῶν πολιτειῶν τῶν ἐνταξίαν; τοῖσιν δὲ ἡμῶν εἰσρηγασαμένοι, ταῦτα ἡμῶν ἔδωκε νόμους, ταῦτα τῶν κατεστησάτο πολιτειῶν, ὡς τὰς ταῖς χρῆμασι ἀγέλης ἐνδίας γινέσθαι, καὶ ὁμοίως διὰ τῶν δυνάμεων τῶν ἡμετέρων. Chryl. in Joh. 1. 14.
Ὅσα καὶ πᾶσι καλῶς εἰρηται, Χριστιανῶν δὲ. Iud. M. Apol. 1.
Vid. Lud. Viv. in Aug. de Civ. D. 10. 4.

Qua disputationes, qua litera quorumlibet Philosophorum, qua leges quorumlibet civitatum duobus praeceptis, ex quibus Christus dicit totam legem prophetasque pendere, ullo modo sint comparanda? Aug. Epist. 3. ad Voluf.

Vid. Chryl. An. 19.
Ἀλλὰ ἐνδελεχῶς τὰν νόμων τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀνδρῶν διὰ τῶν Χριστῶν γνώσεως καὶ διδασκαλίας σωφροσύνης, καὶ δικαιοσύνης, καρτείας τε βίης καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀνδρεία εὐσεβείας τε ὁμολογία ἐνδὲς καὶ μόνος οὗ ἐν παντὶ διὰ διατρέψεως. Euseb. hist. 1. 4.

is the rule of Christian practice; a rule in perfection, in beauty, in efficacy far surpassing all other rules; productive of a goodness more complete, more lovely, more sprightly, than any other doctrine or institution hath been, or can be able to bring forth; much exceeding not only the righteousness of blind Pharisees, but all the virtue of the most sage * Philosophers; somewhat in part concurrent therewith Philosophy hath descried and delivered ('tis no wonder it should, since all of it is so plainly consonant to reason;) yet what Philosophy hath in this kind afforded, is in truth, if compared with what our Religion teacheth, exceedingly meagre, languid and flat: two words here, *Thou shalt love the lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thy self*, do signify more, do contain in them more sense and savour, to the judgment and relish of a well disposed mind, than the *Ethicks* of Aristotle, the *Offices* of Cicero, the *Precepts* and *Dissertations* of Epictetus, the many other Volumes of Philosophical morality all put together; in matter our Rule is far more rich and full, more sweet and sapid than theirs; in force and efficacy it doth also (as we shall hereafter see) far excel them.

4. We may hereto annex this consideration, which may pass for another peculiar advantage of our Religion, that as it delivereth so excellent and perfect a rule of life, so it delivereth it unto us pure from any alloy embasing, free of any clog encumbering it; for that it chiefly, and in a manner only requireth of us a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties, plainly necessary or profitable; not withdrawing us from the

Negotiosa scrupulositates. Tertull. in Marc. 2.

Quadam paucis eademque facta facillima, et intellectu augustissima, et observatione castissima, Dominus, et Apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum, et celebratio corporis et sanguinis Domini. Aug. de Doct. Chr. 3. 9.

Dominus noster Jesus Christus legi jugo nos subdidit, et sarcina levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, significatione praestantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit; sicuti est Baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius, et siquid aliud in Scripturis canonicis commendatur. Aug. Ep. 118. ad Januar.

practice of solid piety and virtue by obligations to a tedious observance of many external rites; not spending the vigour of our minds upon superficial formalities (or busy scrupulosities, as Tertullian termeth them) such as serve only to amuse childish fancies, or to depress slavish spirits. It supposeth us men, men of good understanding, and ingenuous disposition, and dealeth with us as such; and much more such it rendreth us, if we comply therewith. The ritual observances it enjoineeth, are as few in number, in nature simple and easy to perform, so evidently reasonable, very decent, and very useful; apt to instruct us in, able to excite us unto the practice of most wholesome duties: which consideration sheweth this doctrine to be complete, suitable to the most adult age, and best constitution, to the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But farther,

5. Our Religion hath also this especial advantage, that it setteth before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice; wherein we have all its precepts compacted as it were into one body, and at once exposed to our view. Example yieldeth the most compendious instruction, together with the most efficacious incitement to action; but never was there, or could be, any example in either respect comparable to this; never was any so thoroughly perfect in it self, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for imitation, or so forcibly engaging thereto, as this: there is not one flaw, one spot, one false or uneven

Longum est iter per precepta, breve et efficax per exempla. Sen.

or uneven stroke in all this copy, so that we are secure from doing amiss in transcribing any part thereof; it was intended to conduct us through all the parts of duty, especially those which are most high and difficult to our frail and decayed nature, general charity, self-denial, humility and patience: it was admirably squared for the imitation of all men, the person in whom it shined being as it were indefinite, and unrestrained to any single condition; he being in right and power superiour to the greatest Princes, though according to choice and in outward parts inferiour to the meanest subjects; having under his command the largest wealth, although enjoying none; being able readily to procure to himself what glory and respect he pleased, yet pleasing to pass obscure and disregarded; so teaching those of highest rank to be sober and condescensive, those of lowest degree to be patient and content in their respective states; teaching all men not to rest in, nor much to regard these present things, but singly in all their doings above all things to seek God's honour, with main resolution and diligence to prosecute his service: and as to all degrees, so to all capacities was his practice suited, being neither austere nor remiss, formal nor singular, careless nor boisterous; but in a moderate, even and uniform course so tempered, that persons of all callings and all complexions easily might follow him in the practice of all true righteousness, in the performance of all substantial duties toward God and toward man. It is also an example attended with the greatest obligations and inducements to follow it; the great excellency and high dignity of the person, being the most holy first-born Son of God, heir of eternal Majesty; our manifold relations to him, being our Lord and Master, our best friend, our most gracious Redeemer; the many inestimable benefits received by us from him, all that redemption from extreme misery, and capacity of perfect happiness, do import, are so many potent arguments engaging us to imitate him.

6. Farther, Our Religion doth not only thus truly and fully acquaint us with our duty; but, which is another peculiar vertue thereof, it buildeth our duty upon most solid grounds, presseth it with most valid inducements, draweth it from the best principles, and driveth it to the best ends: No philosophy can in any measure represent vertue so truly estimable and eligible, can assign so evident and cogent reason why we should embrace it and strictly adhere thereto, can so well discover or describe the excellent fruits that grow upon it, as doth this Philosophy of ours, as the ancient Fathers are wont to call it. Other Philosophies have indeed highly commended vertue, and vehemently exhorted thereto; but the grounds on which they laid its praise are very sandy, the arguments by which they enforced its practice are very feeble, the principles from which they deduced it, and the ends which they propounded thereto, are very poor and mean, if we discuss them; at least if they be compared with ours: Vertue, said they, is a thing of it self, upon account of its own native beauty and worth, abstracting from all reward or profit springing from it, very admirable and desirable; it is beside a very pleasant and very useful thing, begetting tranquillity and satisfaction of mind; yielding health, safety, reputation, pleasure, quiet, and other manifold conveniences of life: but can so magnificent and so massy a fabrick of commendation stand firm upon such foundations as these? are these principles of love and admiration toward we know not what, these ends of temporal advantage and convenience, so noble or worthy? are the accommodations of this short and uncertain life a proper encouragement, or a just recompence for the laborious atchievements of true vertue? are these weapons sufficient to fortify men, or these discourses able to animate them in resisting the temptations which avert from vertue, or avoiding the enchantments which allure to vice? Will men, I say, readily, for the sake of an imaginary or insensible thing (a goodly name only, for all they see) which representeth no more of benefit attending it, cross the bent of their natural inclinations, forfeit their present ease, reject certain fruitions of pleasure, wave occasions of getting to themselves profit, honour and power, goods so manifestly substantial and grateful to nature? will they undergo contentedly the difficulties, encounter the dangers, sustain the pains, the disgraces, the losses commonly incident to vertue? No surely, when it cometh to earnest trial,

trial, it will hardly seem reason or wisdom so to do. But the Christian Doctrine, as it comprizeth, and in an inferiour order urgeth also such grounds and arguments, so it doth exhibit others far more solid and forcible: it commendeth goodness to us, not only as agreeable to man's imperfect and fallible reason, but as conformable to the perfect goodness of God, as the dictate of his infallible wisdom, as the resolution of his most holy will; as enjoined by his unquestionable authority, as our indispensable duty, and only way to happiness: the principles, from which it willet us to act, are love, reverence and gratitude to God, hearty good-will toward men, and a sober regard to our own true welfare; the ends which it prescribeth, are God's honour, publick edification, and the salvation of our own souls: it stirreth us to good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble the supreme goodness, shall express our gratitude toward that great benefactor, unto whom we owe all that we have; shall discharge our duty, pay due honour, perform faithful service to our Almighty Lord and King; that we shall thereby surely decline the wrath and displeasure of God, shall surely obtain his favour and mercy, with all sorts of blessings needful or profitable for us; that we shall not only avoid regrets and terrors of conscience here, but escape endless miseries and torments; we shall not only procure present comfort and peace of mind, but shall acquire crowns of everlasting glory and bliss. These surely are the truest and firmest grounds upon which a right estimation of vertue can subsist, these are motives incomparably most effectual to the embracing thereof; these are the purest fountains whence it can spring, the noblest marks whither it can aim; a vertue so grounded, so reared, is certainly most sound and genuine, most firm and stable, most infinitely beneficial. But farther,

7. 'Tis a peculiar advantage of Christianity (which no other Law or Doctrine so much as pretendeth to) that it not only clearly teacheth us, and strongly persuadeth us to so excellent a way of life, but provideth also sufficient help and ability to practise it; without which (such is the frailty of our nature, as experience proveth, that) all instruction, all exhortation, all encouragement would avail little. Other laws, for want of this, are in effect *ministries of condemnation*, racks of conscience, parents of guilt, and of regret; reading hard lessons, but not assisting to do after them, imposing heavy burthens, but not enabling to bear them: Our Law is not such; 'tis not a *dead letter*, but hath a *quickning spirit* accompanying it; it not only soundeth through the ear, but stampeth it self upon the heart of him that sincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it a sure guide to all good, and a safe guard from all evil: If our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth us to a faithful Oracle, where we may receive counsel and information: If our passions are unruly, if our appetites are outrageous, if temptations be violent and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to a full magazine, whence we may furnish our selves with all manner of arms to withstand and subdue them: If our condition, in respect to all other means, be disconsolate or desperate, it sendeth us to a place, where we shall not fail of refreshment and relief; it offereth, upon our earnest seeking and asking, the wisdom and strength of God himself for our direction, our aid, our support and comfort in all exigencies. To them, who with due fervency and constancy *ask it*, God hath in the Gospel promised to *grant his holy Spirit*, to guide them in their ways, to admonish them of their duty, to strengthen them in obedience, to guard them from surprizes, and assaults of temptation, to sustain them, and cheer them in afflictions. This advantage, as it is proper to our Religion, so it is exceedingly considerable; for what would the most perfect rule or way signify without as well a power to observe it, as a light to discern it? and how can man (so ignorant, so impotent, so inconstant a creature; so easily deluded by false appearances, and transported with disorderly passions; so easily shaken and unsettled by any small assault) either alone without some guidance perceive, or by himself without some assistance prosecute what is good for him, especially in cases of intricacy and difficulty? how should he, who hath frequent experience of his own weakness, not be utterly disheartned and cast into despair either of standing fast in a good state, or of recovering himself from a bad one; of rescuing himself from any vicious inclination,

2 Cor. 3. 7, 9.
Rom. 5. 20.
Aug. de Spir.
et lit.
Τὸς ἐν βίῳ
ἐπαρνεύμενοις
ἐξ ὧν πρὸς τὴν
λατρίαν σὺν-
εὐαγγέλιον.
Clem. Alex.
Strom. 6. 2.
523.

Luke 11. 13.

nation, or attaining any vertuous habit, if he did not apprehend such a friendly power vigilantly guarding him, ready upon all occasions to succour and abett him? This consideration it is, which only can nourish our hope, can excite our courage, can quicken and support our endeavour in religious practice, by assuring us, that there is no duty so hard, which by the grace vouchsafed us, we may not atchieve; that there is no enemy so mighty, which by the help afforded us we cannot master; so that, although we find our selves *able to do* Phil. 4. 13. *nothing of our selves, yet we can do all things by Christ that strengthneth us.*

8. Another peculiar excellency of our Religion is this, that it alone can appease and satisfy a man's conscience, breeding therein a well grounded hope, and a solid comfort; healing the wounds of bitter remorse, and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict: *There is no man* (as King Solomon said, 2 Chr. 6. 36. Ecclef. 7. 20. *who sinneth not*; who doth not find himself in thought, word and deed frequently thwarting the dictates of reason, violating the laws of piety and justice, transgressing the bounds of sobriety; who consequently doth not in his own judgment condemn himself of disorder, and of offence committed against the world's great Lawgiver and Governour, the just Patron of right and goodness; who thence doth not deem himself obnoxious to God's wrath, and is not fearful of deserved punishment from him: which fear must needs be fostered and augmented by considering, that as past facts are irrevocable, so guilt is indelible, and punishment, except by the voluntary remission of him that is offended, inevitable; as also that there are no visible means of removing or abating such guilt by any reparation or amends that he can make, who is more apt to accumulate new offences, than able to compensate for what he hath committed. Now in such a case, some man indeed may frame to himself hopes of mercy; may from the experience of God's forbearance to punish, and continuance of his bounty to sinners, presume that God is placable, and will not be rigorous in his proceedings with him, may hopefully guess, that in favour God will admit his endeavours at repentance, will accept the compensations he offereth in lieu of his duty, may suffer his guilt to be atoned by the sacrifices he presenteth; Yet can no man upon such presumptions ground a full confidence that he shall find mercy; he cannot however be satisfied upon what terms mercy will be granted, in what manner it shall be dispensed, or how far it shall extend; God never having exhibited any express declarations or promises to those purposes. No man therefore can otherwise than suspect himself to be in a bad state, or esteem himself secure from the pursuits of justice and wrath; as he knoweth that *sin lieth at the door*, so he cannot know but that vengeance may lie near it; hence common reason, as well as the Jewish Law, is a *ministry of death*, and a *killing letter*, carrying nothing in the looks or language thereof, but death and ruine; hence is a man (if at least he be not besotted into a careless stupidity) shut up in an irksome bondage of spirit, under the grievous tyranny, if not of utter despair, yet, of restless suspicion about his condition; which as it quencheth in his mind all steady peace and joy, so it dampeth his courage and alacrity, it enervateth his care and industry to do well, he doubting what success and what acceptance his undertakings may find; it also cooleth in him good affections towards God, whom that he hath offended he knoweth, and questioneth whether he can be able to reconcile.

From this unhappy plight our Religion thoroughly doth rescue us, assuring us, that God Almighty is not only reconcileable, but desirous upon good terms to become our friend, himself most frankly proposing overtures of grace, and soliciting us to close with them; it upon our compliance tendereth, under God's own hand and seal, a full discharge of all guilts and debts however contracted; it receiveth a man into perfect favour and friendship, if he doth not himself wilfully reject them, or resolve to continue at distance, in estrangement and enmity toward God. It proclaimeth, that if we be careful to amend, God will not be *extreme to mark what we do amiss*: that iniquity, if we do not incorrigibly affect and cherish it, *shall not be our ruine*; that although by our firmity we fall often, yet by our repentance we may rise again, and by our sincerity shall stand upright; that our endeavours to serve and please God (although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere) will be accepted by him:

him : this is the tenour of that great covenant between heaven and earth, which the Son of God did procure by his intercession, did purchase by his merits of wonderful obedience and patience, did ratify and seal by his blood; did publish to mankind, did confirm by miraculous works, did solemnize by holy institutions, doth by the Evangelical ministry continually recommend to all men; so that we can no wise doubt of its full accomplishment on God's part, if we be not deficient on ours: so to our inestimable benefit and unspeakable comfort doth our Religion ease their conscience, and encourage them in the practice of their duty, who do sincerely embrace it, and firmly adhere thereto.

1 Cor. 1. 17.

— 2. 2.

Ἀπλῶς ὁ μὴ

θείας ἔφυ —

Eurip.

Vid. Orig. in

Cell. lib. 6.

Lact. 3. 1.

Matt. 7. 29.

9. The last advantage which I shall mention of this doctrine, is this, that it propoundeth and asserteth it self in a manner very convincing and satisfactory: it propoundeth it self in a style and garb of speech, as accommodate to the general capacity of its hearers, so, proper to the authority which it claimeth, becoming the Majesty and sincerity of divine truth; it expresseth it self plainly and simply, without any affectation or artifice, without ostentation of wit or eloquence, such as men study to insinuate and impress their devices by: It also

Οὐ γὰρ κτύπον ῥημάτων, εἰδὲ λέξεως κτύπον, εἰδὲ ὀνομάτων, ἢ ῥημάτων κτύπον, ἢ συνδύκων ἐφέμεθα περὶ τὴν καὶ αὐτῶν (πρόβω γὰρ ταῦτα, ὅτι φιλοσοφίας ἀπείροισι) ἀλλὰ ἰσχυρὸν ἀμαχον καὶ δειαν, καὶ δυνάμεων ὁρδῶν ἀμνηχανον δύναμιν, καὶ μυρίων χορηγίαν ἀγαθῶν. Chryl. proem. in Joh.

speaketh with an imperious and awful confidence, such as argueth the speaker satisfied both of his own wisdom and authority; that he doubteth not of what he saith himself, that he knoweth his hearers obliged to believe him; its words are not like the words of a wise man, who is wary and careful that he slip not into mistake (interposing therefore now and then his may-be's and perchances) nor like the words of a learned Scribe grounded on semblances of

reason, and backed with testimonies; nor as the words of a crafty Sophister, who by long circuits, subtle fetches, and fly trains of discourse, doth inveagle men to his opinion; but like the words of a King, carrying with them authority and power uncontrollable, commanding forthwith attention, assent and obedience; this you are to believe, this you are to do, upon pain of our high displeasure, at your utmost peril be it; your life, your salvation dependeth thereon: such is the style and tenour thereof, plainly such as becometh the Sovereign Lord of all to use, when he shall please to proclaim his mind and will unto us. It freeth us from laborious and anxious enquiries, from endless disputes and janglings, from urging ineffectual arguments, and answering cross difficulties, &c. It doth also assert it self and approve its truth to the reason of man the most advantageously that can be; with proofs most suitable to it self, and in themselves most effectual; waving those inferior methods of subtle argumentation and plausible language, with which men are wont to confirm or set off their conceits; which how weak they are, how unfit to maintain truth, their unsuccessfulness doth evince; seeing by those means

Qua quidem tradita sunt breviter, ac nude, nec enim decebat aliter, ut cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis affereret suas voces, tanquam fides ei non haberetur, sed ut oportuit est locutus, quasi verum omnium maximus iudex, cuius non est argumentari, sed pronunciare verum. Lact. 3.

Legant nostra — quam excellenter, quam divinit, non tanquam ex philosophorum concertationibus strepare, sed tanquam ex oraculis & Dei nubibus intonare. Aug. de Civ. Dei 2. 19.

scarce any man hath been able thoroughly either to settle himself in, or to draw others to a full persuasion concerning any important truth, discoloured from sense: such methods therefore the Christian doctrine hath waved (or rather slighted, as beneath it self) applying arguments to the demonstration of its truth, far more potent, more sublime, and indeed truly divine; besides its intrinsic worth, or the excellency shining in its self (which speaketh it worthy of God, and goeth more than half way in proving it to proceed from him) there is no kind of attestation needful or proper, which God hath not afforded thereto. God is in himself invisible and undiscernible to any sense of ours, neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence; it must be therefore by effects of his incommunicable power, by works extraordinary and supernatural (such as no creature can perform or counterfeit) that he must, if ever, convincingly signify his purpose or pleasure to us; and such innumerable hath God vouchsafed to yield in favour and countenance of our Religion; by clearly predicting and presignifying the future revelation of this doctrine by express voices, and manifest apparitions from heaven, by suspending and thwarting the course of natural causes in many ways and instances, by miracles of provi-

SERM. XVI. Of the Excellency of the Christian Religion. 999

providence no less remarkable than those of nature, by internal attestations to the minds and consciences of men; things too great slightly to be passed over, and the particular mention of which I must therefore now omit: by such wonderful means, I say, hath God taken care to convince us, that our Religion came from him, which is a peculiar advantage that it hath, such as no other Institution (except that of the Jews, which was a prelude thereto, and whose truth serveth to confirm it) can reasonably pretend unto; and a great perfection it is thereof, since as it is no small content to a traveller, by a direction which he can fully confide in, to know that he is in the right way to his journey's end; so it cannot but prove an exceeding satisfaction and encouragement to us to be assured, by infallible testimony of God himself, that our Religion is the true and direct way unto eternal happiness.

These considerations may, I conceive, be sufficient, as to vindicate our Religion from all aspersions cast upon it either by inconsiderate and injudicious, or by vain and dissolute persons; so to confirm us all in the esteem, and incite us to the practice thereof; which use of them God in his mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all praise. Amen.

Now the God of Grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ 1 Pet. 4. 10. Jesus—Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved 2 Thel. 2. 16. us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope, through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

True Messiah

ACTS IX. 33.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVII.

THAT
JESUS
IS THE
True MESSIAS.

ACTS IX. 22.

Proving that this is the very Christ.

*But Saul en-
creased the
more in
strength, and
confoundeth the
Jews, which
dwelt at Da-
mascus, pro-
ving that this
is the very
Christ. Euseb.
hist. 1. 3.
Ecl. 7. 14.
Jer. 23. 6.
Isa. 9. 6.*

AS for the name of the *Messias*, there is evident reason, why it should not be openly expressed in the ancient predictions; it being an easy thing for any persons out of imposture, or wantonness to have assumed that name, and consequently it would not have suited so well the true person. It was therefore more expedient, that his name should rather only be covertly signified or intimated; it was sufficient that a name should be imposed on him well agreeing to his office and chief performances. There be indeed several names attributed to the *Messias*; *They shall call his name Emmanuel* (said *Esay*.) *This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness* (*Jehovah tsidkenu*): And, *His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellour, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*, said *Esaïas* again; but it is apparent, that these were not intended to be so much his proper names, as attributes, or epithets congruous unto him in regard to the eminency of his person, and performances.

The Prophet *Zechary* seemeth also (insisting in the footsteps of *Esay* and *Jeremy*) to assign him the name *Netser* (or the Branch) *Behold the man whose name is the Branch*; but this only denoted an appellation suiting him, as derived from the stock of *David*, and might beside mystically allude to some circumstance concerning him. It doth not therefore appear, that the one proper name, by which the *Messias*, as the son of Man should be known and called, is directly forementioned; yet it is reasonable to suppose, that God would have an especial care, that he should have one befitting him. It was one of the seven things, which the *Talmudists* say were constituted before the world: the *Law*, *Repentance*, *Paradise*, *Hell*, the *Throne of glory*, the

the Sanctuary, the name of the Messias; according to that in the seventy second Psalm (verse 17.) *Ante solem primum nomen ejus*; so it seems they read it: the LXX have it, *πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου πρῶτον τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ*.

It was anciently a method of divine providence to impose upon persons (destinated by God to be special subjects of his favour, and eminent ministers of his glory) names answerable to the nature of their employment, or to the design, which was by their means and ministry to be accomplished. Whereby as God's care and providence over humane affairs was declared, so men upon the mention of such names were admonished to consider the divine benefits, and the duties correspondent to them. The particular reason of imposing such names is sometime expressly set down; as in the cases of *Seth*, Gen. 4. 25. *Abraham*, *Israel*, *Solomon*; sometime it seems tacitly implied, the actions of the persons interpreting the reason of their names, as in *Melchisedeck*, *Joshua*, 1 Chr. 22. 9. *Malachi*, and perhaps in many others. Gen. 13. 18. Heb. 7. 1.

This method with great reason we may suppose, that the same divine wisdom would use in assigning a name to that Person, whom from the beginning of things he had promised, and before the foundation of the world had designed to sanctify and send into the world, for achieving the most high, and excellent design, that ever for the glory of God and the good of his creation, was to be undertaken in this world. Most fit it would be, that God himself should be his God-father; that he should have no ordinary, no casual, no insignificant name; but such an one, which being heard might instruct and admonish us, might raise in us a sense of God's infinite mercy and bounty toward us; might breed love in our hearts, and impress veneration on our minds toward him, who should bear that auspicious and comfortable name; that name, which as the spouse of the mystical *Solomon* in her Cant. 1. 3. mystical song did sing is *as an ointment poured forth*, full of most wholesome, and most pleasant fragrancy.

Now since of all the *Messias* his performances none was to be more significant, than that of saving; to publish, to purchase, to effect salvation were to be (according to what Prophets expressly and frequently say) his peculiar works; to be the Saviour of the world was (as we before touched, according to the common opinion of the *Jews*) a proper attribute of his. If. 25. 9. 35. 4. 49. 8. 26. 63. 1. 55. 5. 52. 7. 10. 61. 10. 59. 16.

Wherefore the name *Jesus* (which we are told in the Gospel was by direction from God imparted by particular revelation, brought by an Angel from heaven, imposed on our Lord) did very well suit the *Messias*. No other name could be more sweet, or acceptable; no other name could better become him, who was to redeem men from all their enemies, their slaveries, their errors, their sins, their miseries. Hof. 1. 7. Zech. 9. 9. John 4. 42. Matt. 1. 21. Luke 1. 32. 2. 21.

It was indeed a name not in its immediate application altogether new, for many others had born it; *Jesus*, the son of *Justus* we have mentioned in Col. 4. 11. *St. Paul*, *Jesus* the son of *Sirach*, that excellent writer we know; and divers others so named occur in *Josephus*; yet was it questionless by God's providence, or by *Moses*, by divine instinct, first produced with relation to the *Messias*; *Moses* called *Oshea* the son of *Nun* *Jehoshua*, saith the Text: being in a mysterious exchange from a former name assigned to the famous *Jesus* (as not only *Ben-sirach*, but the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* write him) the son of *Nun*, who of all the ancient types did most exactly (in office and performance) represent and presignify the *Messias*; being (as *Ben-sirach* speaks) *great for the saving of God's elect*; whose actions are wonderfully congruous to those, which we attribute to our *Jesus*. For, by the way to shew the resemblance (omitting less, and more nice congruities) as *Joshua* did bring the good report, and evangelized concerning the promised land (when other false or faint inquirers defamed it, and discouraged the people from entering) as he was educated under *Moses* and served him faithfully; as he succeeded in the administration and government of God's people, perfecting what *Moses* had begun of deliverance and settlement to them; As he brought the *Israelites* (not that old disbelieving, mutinous and repining generation, but a new progeny of better disposed people) finally out of the wilderness into *Canaan*, by God's miraculous assistance, subduing their Enemies, and establishing them in a quiet Numb. 24. 7.

quiet possession of the promised land, allotting unto each Tribe its inheritance; and as he did re-circumcise the children of *Israel*, so did our heavenly *Jesus* first make a true and faithful discovery concerning the mystical land of promise (that better country) flowing with spiritual milk and honey (abundant with all spiritual comforts and pleasures, for the food, sustenance and refreshment of our souls.) He was born under the Law and submitted to its injunctions, fulfilling all righteousness. He survived it (the part of it, which was purely *Mosaic* and arbitrary) and did complete it. He doth conduct God's regenerate People (such as believe, and willingly follow him) out of the desert state of error, guilt and sin, into the superiour state of happy rest and joy, with miraculous power and efficacy; vanquishing all the spiritual *Amorites* (the *Devil, World* and *Flesh*) which infest, obstruct and oppose them; settling them in a perpetual undisturbed and immoveable enjoyment of that blissful region; having also by a spiritual circumcision prepared and consecrated them to God. Our Saviour therefore not only when he at last in fulness of truth did come into the world, but anciently in type and shadow may be supposed to have received this name *Jesus*, conferr'd upon him in the person of *Joshua*, his most illustrious representative. It certainly was most apposite to the *Messias*.

That *Jesus* (that Person, whose Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension hence, are related in the Evangelical histories) is *the Christ*, is the principal Article of pure faith; the most peculiar doctrine of our Religion as such, and as distinct from all other Religions: it indeed virtually comprehends all other doctrines of moment therein, regarding either faith or practice. For that our being persuaded that *Jesus* is *the Christ*, implies, that we apprehend our selves obliged to embrace for truth whatever was taught by him and his Apostles, to obey all his laws, to rely upon him for attainment of all the mercies and blessings, and rewards, which he promised to dispence, in that order and upon those terms, which the Gospel declareth. Whence to the hearty belief of this Point such great commendations are given, so high rewards are offered, so excellent privileges are annexed in the Scriptures. Whence also the declaring, proving and persuading this doctrine was the chief matter of the Apostles preaching, as both their profession and practice do shew. *The Jews* (saith St. Paul to the *Corinthians*) *require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ, that was crucified.* And, *I determined* (saith he again of himself) *not to know any thing among you* (that is not to discover any other knowledge, not to insist on any other subject) *saves Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified.* This St. John tells us was the drift of his writing the Gospel (which is a more extensive, and durable way of preaching) *These things* (saith he) *were written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ.* And their practice, suitable to such professions, is apparent in divers passages of this Book, wherein their acts, and their discourses are reported. This Text particularly represents the scope, to which St. Paul mainly directed his Preaching, which was the maintenance and persuasion of this Point, that *Jesus* is *the Christ*.

It is therefore very requisite, that we should well understand the meaning thereof, and that we should firmly be persuaded of its truth. To which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's assistance, to imitate St. Paul's practice here, who did *συμβάλλειν* (that is the Greek word here, signifying primarily to put, or bring things together, and thence in a way of collection or argumentation to teach) who, I say, did instruct his auditors, collecting it from testimonies of ancient scripture, and confirming it by arguments grounded thereon. In performing which I shall observe this method.

1. I shall explain the notion and reason of this name, or title *Christ*.
2. I shall shew (that which is here tacitly supposed) that there was by God's appointment to be, or to come into the world from God one Person, signally that, which this name or title imports, *ὁ Χριστός*, the very *Christ*.
3. I shall argue that *Jesus* was that Person.
4. I shall explain in what manner, in what respects, to what purposes *Jesus* in the *New Testament* is represented as *Christ*.

5. I shall make some practical application of the Point.

I. For the first particular. *Christ* is a name, or title, importing office and dignity; being the same with *Messias*, that in *Greek*, this in *Hebrew* signifying the Anointed; the which appellation we find attributed to several persons upon the following ground: Of ancient times in the *Eastern Countries* (abounding as with good oyl, so with many delicate odoriferous spices) it seems generally to have been the manner (as from *Hazael* the Syrian his being anointed may probably be collected, it was however such among the *Jews*) to separate or consecrate persons (and things also I might add) designed to any great or extraordinary employment, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients; they symbolizing, or denoting thereby (as it seems) both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts and faculties qualifying them for such services; and also a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them (from the use of things, the performances of persons thus sanctified) *Thy name*, saith the *Spouse* in the *Canticles*, is as an ointment poured forth; that is, thy name is very delightful, very acceptable. And, *Behold* (saith *David*, commending brotherly love and concord) *how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard*—so good and pleasant were those employments hoped to be, to which men were by such unction inaugurated. We find especially three sorts of Persons, to whom this consecration did, by divine appointment, belong; *Kings, Priests and Prophets*; persons by whose ministry God of old did manage his intercourse with men, in governing them and communicating his blessings to them, both in an ordinary way (so he used *Kings and Priests*) and in an extraordinary manner, therein he employed *Prophets*; which sorts of persons are therefore styled God's anointed; *Kings and Priests* more frequently, but sometimes also *Prophets*; as in that of the *Psalms*: *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*; where *Prophets* and the Anointed of God do seem to denote the same thing, and one to expound the other; however they belong to the same persons: for *Abraham*, whom together with the other *Patriarchs* those words concern, is expressly called a Prophet. (Now therefore, saith the Text, restore the man his wife, for he is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee; and thou shalt live.) And that *Isaac* was a Prophet, the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* intimates, saying, *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come*. The same is plain of *Jacob*, who before his death uttered many great and remarkable predictions. The *Patriarchs* therefore probably as *Prophets* were styled God's Anointed. But to remark somewhat of these great offices, and their anointing singly:

For *Priests*, although at first all the Sons of *Aaron* were thus consecrated, according to that Law in *Exodus*, *Thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons, that they may minister unto me in the Priest's office*; yet the *Jewish* Masters tell us, that afterward in all the course of times only the High-priest was so consecrated. Whence by the anointed, or the Priest that is anointed, is, say they, meant the High-priest, in distinction from other inferior Priests.

For *Kings*, the *Jewish* Doctors also (as Master *Selden* reports) do tell us, that such of them, who in a legal, orderly, and unquestioned course of right did succeed unto the Kingdom, were not themselves in person anointed (they being conceived to derive a sufficient consecration from their Ancestours) but all those, who in an extraordinary way by special designation (as *Saul, David, Jehu, Hazael*) or upon a doubtful, and controverted, or opposed title (as *Solomon and Joas*) did assume the royal charge, were thus initiated. (How ancient also the custom of anointing Princes was, may be seen from that expression in *Jotham's* parable: *The trees went forth to anoint a King over them, and they said to the Olive-tree, Reign thou over us*.)

As for *Prophets*, we do not find that they were commonly, or according to ordinary rule, anointed; but one plain instance we have of *Elisha*, substituted to *Elijah* (the chief of *Prophets* in his time) in this manner: *Elisha*, (it is said by God) *the son of Shaphat shalt thou anoint to be Prophet in thy room*; who was thus consecrated, probably, because he was to be a Prophet more than ordinary, endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater actions, than common

mon Prophets were then; or perhaps because he was to be the *Arch-prophet*, or head of the Prophets at that time.

We may also farther observe, that some persons, who (in probability) did not partake any material unction, but were yet destinated by God, and qualified and employed as special instruments of his providence or grace, for producing effects suitable to any of those offices, have been therefore styled God's *anointed*. Upon which score the *Patriarchs* (by whom God's true Religion was maintained and conveyed) do seem to have been called God's *Anointed*. And King *Cyrus* (whose ministry God used in the re-edifying his Temple, and refreshing his People) is therefore termed God's *Christ*, or *Anointed* (*Thus saith the Lord to his Anointed, to Cyrus my Christ; ὁ Χριστός μου Κύρος*) the name of the sign being imparted to persons, who were endued with the qualities, or did perform the effects signified thereby.

These things being considered, it appeareth that the name *Christ* doth import a Person in a special and signal manner designed and ordained by God to one, or some, or all of these charges and functions; an extraordinary *King*, or a great *Priest*, or an eminent *Prophet*; or one, in whom either more, or all of these did concur; so much may suffice for the notion and reason of this title, *Christ*.

II. Now that there was a person supereminently endued with all these characters (a *Christ* in all these respects) decreed by God in due time to come into the world for accomplishment of the greatest purposes answerable to that Title (for the instruction and reformation of the world, for the erecting and managing an universal and perpetual Kingdom, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, for the reduction of all Nations to the acknowledgment of God, and obedience to his will, and hope in his mercy) many express passages in the ancient Scripture declare.

Deut. 18. 15, 28. That such a Prophet should be sent, *Moses* in express terms foretold: *The Lord thy God (saith he) shall raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken.* And, *I will (saith God himself) raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee: And I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him, &c.* Which words plainly describe a very extraordinary Prophet sometime to come, who was (signally and especially, beyond all other Prophets) to resemble *Moses*, who consequently was to accomplish high designs, and to achieve wonderful acts; to conduct and deliver God's people, to reveal God's mind and will, to promulge a new Law, and establish a new Covenant; so his resembling *Moses* doth imply, so his mission doth signify (for why, if he were not intended for the performance of somewhat great and new, even beyond what *Moses* did, should he be designed so formally; what need or reason had there been of his mission, after *Moses*?) and so the later Prophets do interpret the great Law-giver his words: Who largely predict concerning one, ordained by God to come; who should eminently discharge all parts of the prophetic function; who should disclose new truths to men, should proclaim a new law to the world, should *establish a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with all people*; who should propagate the knowledge and worship of God, enlightning the Gentiles, and converting them unto God; who should instruct the ignorant, strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted; according to divers passages concerning him: As for instance, that in *Esay*, cited by St. *Luke*: *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted*—and that in the same Prophet, alledged by St. *Matthew*: *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles, he shall not cry, &c.* which being anointed to preach tidings, and to bring forth judgment from God; being elected and inspired by God in order to such performances, are peculiar marks of a Prophet; such promulgation of God's will, such ministration of direction and comfort from God are the proper employment of a Prophet, that is, of an especial Agent sent and qualified by God to transact spiritual affairs with men, and to declare or denounce his pleasure to them.

The

The ancient Scriptures do also plainly signify concerning the same person, that he should be a great Prince constituted by God to govern his people for ever in Acts 2. 36. righteousness, peace and prosperity; endued with power requisite for delivering Luke 1. 71. them from oppression and slavery, for subduing their enemies, for reducing the 74. nations under subjection unto God. So Esay: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders — Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice for ever. Jeremey: Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign, and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth: in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. Ezekiel: I will save my flock, they shall be no more a prey — and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them — they shall also walk in my statutes, and observe my statutes, and do them. Daniel: I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days — And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages shall serve him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Hosea: The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King; and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness, in the latter days. The Psalmist: I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion; ask of me, and I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. In these and in many other places do the Prophets speak (very perspicuously and magnificently) concerning the Kingdom, Royal state, and Princely achievements of this great Personage who should come.

That he also should assume and execute the Priestly function, may also be learned from prophetic instruction. For of him Zechary thus spake: Behold the man whose name is the Branch; (a name, which so often (in sense) is attributed to this Person, as sprouting from the stock of David) he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a Priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the Lord shall be between them both. Of him also David spake: The Lord hath sworn and will not repent; thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. To make reconciliation for iniquity (which Daniel ascribes to him) to bear the sins of the people, and to make intercession for the transgressors (which are assigned to him by Esay) are also performances, from which his sacerdotal office may be collected.

These things being considered, it is no wonder, that the ancient Jews (although the Text of Scripture doth seldom, perhaps not oftner than once (in the ninth of Daniel) explicitly and directly apply this name of Christ, or Messias, to this illustrious Person, so prophesied of, and promised to come) did especially assign this title unto him; it seeming of any most congruous, and most comprehensive of what appertained to him; most apt to denote all the prerogatives, the endowments, the achievements, the effects which should belong to him, or proceed from him. Whence 'tis observed by the learned, that the Chaldee Paraphrase (composed, as they say, before Jesus our Lord his time, by the Priests, as an interpretation of the not so exactly understood Hebrew Scripture, for edification and instruction of the people) doth very often apply unto him this name of the Messias: according to whose exposition and style, together with tradition continually deduced down from the Prophets themselves (as is probable) we see plainly from the New Testament, and from other History conspiring therewith, that God's people unanimously did expect a Person under this name and notion, who should be endued with qualities, and should perform actions conformable to the characters mentioned, to come in determinate time into the world. Of Anna the Prophetess it is said, that she gave thanks likewise to the Lord, and spake of him to all that expected redemption in Jerusalem. Hence when St. John the Baptist did live, and teach in a manner extraordinary, the people did expect, and all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he were the Christ. Yea the Jews (that is their Senate, or great Synedrion) sent Priests and Levites to inquire of him, whether he were the Christ or no: And when Jesus his admirable discourses and works had convinced divers persons, they said, When Christ comes, shall

- he do greater miracles than this man hath done? And the report which Philip made to Nathanael concerning Jesus, was this: *We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write; so at large did they presume concerning a Christ to come.* That they particularly did conceive he should be a great Prophet, who should abundantly declare God's truth and will, may be gathered from divers passages; as from that in St. John: *Men therefore seeing the miracle that Jesus had done, said, That this is in truth the prophet, who was to come into the world.* Thus may that in St. Luke be taken: *And there came a fear upon all, and they glorified God, saying; that the great prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people;* and this the Samaritan woman implied, when she said, *I know that the Messiah comes, and when he shall come he will tell us all things.* That they supposed he should be a King, who should be furnished with mighty power, and should perform wonderful acts; who should assume the government of God's people with royal majesty, and execute it with glorious success, is most clear. It was no wonder to King Herod to hear the Wise-men's inquiry, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* upon it he immediately demands of the Scribes *where Christ is to be born.* Hence no sooner did Nathanael believe in Christ, but he cries out, *Master, Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* It was upon this supposition that the Priests grounded their calumny: *We have found this man perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, the King;* as also hence (upon information and by instinct from them) Pilate asked him that question, *Art thou the King of the Jews?* Hence likewise proceeded that Acclamation: *Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς, Blessed is the King, that is to come in the name of the Lord.* And it was from this ancient popular prejudice, that the Apostles asked Jesus after his resurrection, *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* It is indeed the ordinary Title, which the Talmudists and ancient Rabbins give the Messiah, *Hammelech Messiah, Messiah the King.*
- That the Messiah in their opinion was also to be a Priest, is not so clearly apparent; yet it may probably be inferred: That they understood the 110th Psalm to respect the Messiah, is very likely, or rather certain, from that passage in the Gospel, in which Jesus asked the Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?* and, they answering, *the Son of David,* he returned upon them this puzzling question: *How then doth David in the Spirit (that is prophetically) call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand;* which question confounded them, they not daring to deny that Psalm to respect the Messiah (it being the received opinion among the Doctors) nor yet seeing how the Relations of Son and Lord were reconcilable: And admitting that Psalm was to be referr'd unto the Messiah, they must consequently acknowledge him to be a Priest; for it is there said, *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* It was also an opinion passing among them, that the Messiah should be the Saviour of the World, as may be collected from that saying of the Samaritans: *We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world:* Which being their opinion, and toward the salvation of Men it being needful, that a reconciliation of them unto God, and an expiation of their sins (which are sacerdotal acts) should be procured by him, it seems to follow, that they had some notion of his Priesthood. Indeed the persuasion concerning a Messiah to come, about the time when our Lord appeared, became diffused over the whole Eastern parts; as even Pagan Historians (Tacitus and Suetonius) do report. And the conceit thereof was so vigorous in the Jews, that it excited them to rebellion, and encouraged them with great obstinacy to persist therein, as not only those Historians, but Josephus himself telleth us; he also together with them (which is somewhat strange) referring the intent of those Prophecies, and the verifying of that opinion to the person of the Emperor Vespasian. The same conceit did then likewise occasion many Pretenders and Impostours (such as Theudas, and Judas the Galilean) to arise, disposing also the People so easily to be deluded by them, and so readily to run after them, as they did to their own harm.

Thus

Thus according to the ancient Scriptures, interpreted, and backed by the current Tradition, and general consent of God's People, it is sufficiently apparent, that a *Messias* (according to the notion premised) was to come into the world.

III. Now farther, that *Jesus*, whom we acknowledge, was indeed that *Messias*, may appear plainly from the perfect correspondency of all circumstances belonging to the *Messias* his appearance, and of all characters futing his Person, and of all things to be performed by him; together with whatever was to be consequent upon his presence and performances; according to ancient presignifications and predictions, and according to the passable opinions of God's people concerning him; the which (as they cannot possibly fute with any other person, that hath yet appeared, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter, so) they exactly agree to the coming, and person, and practice, and success of *Jesus*.

Among circumstances the most considerable is the time; the which (both when it was said that he should come, and when it was fit that he should come) did very well agree to *Jesus*. But when the Fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son, &c. Fulness in regard to ancient prediction, in regard to fitness of season. For as the *Messias* was to be the desire of all Nations, so *Jesus* did come then, when by special Instinct a general expectation and desire of his coming was raised in the world; at the time, when the Patriarch *Jacob* foretold that *Shiloh* would come, viz. when the sceptre was just departed from *Judah*, and a Law-giver from his feet; *Judea* being brought under the dominion of strangers (such were the Romans, such was King *Herod*.) About the expiration of *Daniel's* weeks (however commenced, or computed) the time determined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness; to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy (as the Prophet speaks.) Shortly before the destruction of *Hierusalem*, according to that of *Daniel*: And after sixty and two weeks shall *Messias* be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary. When that *Sion*, out of which (as *Esay* tells us) the law was to go forth, and out of which the Redeemer should come, and turn ungodliness from *Jacob*, did stand and flourish. When the Temple did stand, which the Prophets *Malachi* and *Haggai* did predict should be illustrated with the presence of the *Messiah*: The Lord, whom ye seek, saith *Malachi*, shall suddenly come to his Temple; even the messenger of the Covenant in whom ye delight: and, I will (saith *Haggai*) shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord; the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts. Before *Jewery* was desolated, *Jerusalem* destroyed, the Tribes and Families of *Israel* confounded, all that People wofully dispersed, and in a palpable manner deserted by God: When the *Jewish* Religion (which the *Messias* was to complete) was by a numerous accession of *Profelytes* disseminated, and diffused through many Provinces of that one vast Empire, under which a great part of the world was united and settled durably in a calm state of peace and order: when one or two Languages were commonly understood by all, and men thereby more easily conversed together; and when the ancient Scriptures being translated into *Greek* were so widely intelligible. When mankind was become generally civilized and cultivated with laws, and policy, and learning; with knowledge of Arts and Philosophy; the world then beginning of it self to open its eyes, so as to discern the errors and deceits, by which it long had been abused; and was thence well prepared to learn, and rendred very susceptible of divine truth; when all things thus conspired with good advantage to entertain the *Christ*, then in the fulness of time, in the right and proper season (*καρπὸς ἰδίου*, as *St. Paul* speaketh) *καρπὸς δεξιῶν*, in an acceptable time, as *Esay* prophesied, did *Jesus* come, to instruct and reform the world, as he professed. It was *Porphyry's* objection against *Christianity*, and an obvious one, why *Christ* did not come before, but in the latter days; to which the particular fitness of this time is an answer.

The other circumstances; the Family out of which, the place where, the manner in which *Jesus* was born, did also punctually correspond. He was to be an *Israelite*, according to the promise made of old to *Abraham*, that in his Seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and according to *Moses* his Prophecy: The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren.

Isaiah (who prefigured him) was according to a more sublime meaning, and more exactly to agree unto him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever: Also I will make him my first-born higher than the kings of the earth:* And accordingly we see, that the Jews (both the wiser, and the vulgar sort) did suppose that he should be the Son of God: So St. *John the Baptist*, so *Nathanael*, so *Martha*, so St. *Peter*, and the other *Apostles*, when they became persuaded that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, did presently, according to anticipation of judgment common to them with the people, confess him to be the son of God; the High-priest himself intimated the same, when he asked *Jesus*, *Art thou the Christ, the son of the blessed?* Yea, the Devils themselves were learned and orthodox in this point; who cried out, *Thou art the Christ, the son of God.* Now that, according to those Prophecies and those Traditions, the *Messias* should be in a more than ordinary way, and (for the justifying of God's truth together with the satisfying men) should evidently appear to be the son of God, it was requisite (at least convenient) that his birth should be procured by divine operation, without concurrence of a humane father (how otherwise, at least how better, could it be apparent that he was both the son of God, and of man?) It was consequently either necessary, or fit that he should be born of a Virgin: And that he should indeed be so born, the Prophet *Isaiah* did signify, when he said, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign; that is, shall perform somewhat very remarkable and strange: what was that? Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emanuel;* which Prophecy that it belonged to the *Messias* appears from the report and description, which follows in the continuation of this particular Prophecy concerning this child: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called wonderful, &c.* which description unquestionably appertaineth to the *Messias*. The same Prophet signifies the same concerning him, when he introduceth him speaking thus: *And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant, &c.* Now that *Jesus* in correspondence to this admirable character was born of a Virgin, his Parents (persons of unblameable integrity and innocence; so that even the adversaries of *Jesus* appear not ever to have offered to impeach them of imposture, or to have troubled them about this report coming from them) did constantly aver, Angels did attest to their report, and God himself at several times by audible voices from heaven declared *Jesus* to be his beloved son.

The state and condition also, in which the *Messias* was first to appear, was described to be a state of external meanness and obscurity, of poverty and wretchedness in the eye of man: A state indeed most convenient and proper for a spiritual King, a most holy Priest, and absolute Prophet; who was to teach, exercise and exemplify the most rough and harsh pieces of righteousness and piety (contempt of worldly vanities and pleasures; all sorts of self-denial, and abstinence; the virtues of meekness, humility and patience) who was to manage and execute his great undertakings not by natural or humane force, but by a virtue supernatural and divine; whose power consequently would be more conspicuous in a state of visible meanness and impotency, than in a condition of worldly splendour and strength; that also which he was to merit from God, and to undergo for the sake of men doth argue the same: that such the *Messias* his state was to be, there are divers mystical intimations in the ancient Scripture; but the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks it out most plainly: *He shall grow up (says he, describing that state) before the Lord like a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.* And again: *Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his holy one; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of Rulers, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship.*

Now that *Jesus* appeared thus in a poor, servile and despicable condition, we need not for to prove; for as his Followers avow it, so his Adversaries are most ready to grant it, in the haughtiness of their conceit taking it for an advantage against him, it proves a scandal to them. *Is not this the Carpenter's son? Is not this the Carpenter the son of Mary? said they, and they were offended at him.* Hence was it,

— Εἰ δὲ σημεῖον ὅτι τὸ διδόμενον, παρὰ δὲ τῷ ἔσω καὶ τῷ γέννησι. οἱ δὲ κοινὸς ὁ τῷ πᾶσι τῷ γέννησι τὸ παρὰ δὲ, μὴτε σημεῖον λεγέτω. Bal. in Isa. 7.

1 Chr. 22. 10.

2 Sam. 7. 13.

Psal. 89. 27.

John 1. 34.

49. 11. 27.

6. 69.

Matt. 16. 16.

Mark 14. 61.

Matt. 26. 63.

Matt. 8. 29.

Mark 1. 24. 1

Luke 4. 34.

Isa. 7. 14.

Matt. 1. 12.

Isa. 9. 6.

Isa. 49. 5.

Isa. 53. 3.

Isa. 49. 7.

Phil. 2. 7.

2 Cor. 8. 9.

Matt. 13. 55.

Mark 6. 3.

Ita. 53. 3. it, that as the Prophet foretold, *He was despised and rejected of men, and they esteemed him not.* Thus all the circumstances of the Messias his coming were answered by those of Jesus.

Now concerning the qualities and endowments of the Messias; which constitute his personal character; they are, as was expedient, such as should dispose and fit him for the discharge of his great employment and duty with utmost advantage, and especial decency; in general, he was to be endowed with supereminent piety and sanctity, with perfect innocence and integrity; so it is implied in all the descriptions of his person, and performances: *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre; thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity, wherefore God even thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows,* said the Psalmist of him; and *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins,* said Esay of him; (denoting the ready disposition of his mind to do what ever was good:) and, *He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips,* saith the same Prophet of him again. Some particular vertues and abilities are also ascribed to him in an eminent degree: Excellent wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters thus represented by Esay: *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom, and understanding; the spirit of counsel, and might; the spirit of knowledge, and fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.* Eloquence also, skill and aptitude to instruct men; which that most Evangelical Prophet thus sets forth: *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary* —. That he should be meek, and gentle, and compassionate toward men, in regard to their infirmities and afflictions; mild, and lowly in his conversation, the Prophets also signifie: *He shall (saith Esay) feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench:* and, *Behold, saith Zachary, thy King cometh unto thee, he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass.* That he should be of a quiet and peaceable disposition, no-wise fierce or contentious; turbulent or clamorous, Esay declares, thus saying of him (as St. Matthew cites him:) *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.* To his admirable patience in bearing afflictions and contumelies, Esay thus renders express testimony; *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.* And, *I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, I hid not my face from shame, and spitting.* His invincible courage and resolution in God's service, together with his strong confidence in God, and entire submission to God's will, is thus described by the same Prophet: *The Lord God (saith he) will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.* — *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.* His general goodness and boundless charity toward men, the nature of his office and design, together with the whole course and tenour of his practice, such as they are represented, do suppose and imply.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did in his person fully correspond, and did by his practice thoroughly make good this moral high character; the story of his life with admirable simplicity and sincerity, without any semblance of disguise or artifice, represented by persons, who most intimately were acquainted and long conversed with him (or by persons immediately informed by them) and with greatest constancy attested to and maintained by them, doth plainly shew; wherein his incomparable piety toward God, his readiness to fulfil all righteousness, his entire submission and resignation of himself to God's will, the continual fervency (devotion of all kinds, prayer, thanksgiving, fasting, practised in the most intense degree, and in the most reverent manner) his pure and ardent zeal for God's glory, his steadfast resolution, and indefatigable industry in God's service (making it his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to perform his work.)

Wherein an unspotted innocence, not only exempted from the vices and defilements, but raised above the vanities and impertinences of the world; secured by a mag-

a magnanimous contempt, or * neglect and abstinence from all worldly grandeur and splendour; all secular wealth and profit, all bodily delight and ease, wherein an admirable wisdom and prudence, expressed in all his demeanour, and his discourse; in his discerning the secret thoughts and dissembled intentions of men; in his declaring and defending truth, detecting and confuting errors; in baffling learned and wily opposers; in eluding captious questions, and evading treacherous designs; in not meddling with the secular affairs and interests of men; in not encumbering himself with the needless cares and occupations of this life, nor entangling himself in the snares of this world; in dexterously accommodating his behaviour and his speech to the dispositions, the capacities, the needs of men; to the circumstances of things, and exigencies of occasion, so as did best conduce to the promoting his great design and undertaking; so that the people, observing his proceedings, could not but be astonished, and ask, *† Whence hath this man this wisdom?* so that they could not but acknowledge, *He hath done all things well.*

Wherein particularly an excellent faculty of speaking and teaching, of interpreting and applying the Holy Scriptures, of proving and persuading God's truth, whereby he drew the people after him, converted many of them to amendment of life, convinced the most averse and incredulous; so that *all that heard him were amazed at his understanding, and answers*; so that *all bare witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*; so that the Officers sent to apprehend him did confess, *Never man spake like this man.*

Wherein an invincible fortitude and gallantry, expressed in his most constant profession and undaunted maintenance of truth and goodness; in his encountering the prejudices, detecting the frauds, reprovng the vices of the Age, though upheld by the greatest persons and by prevalent Factions; in his plain dealing and free speaking with all sincerity and all authority, in his zealous checking and chastising profane abuses; in his disregarding the rash and fond opinions of men, their spiteful obloquies, harsh censures, slanderous imputations, and unjust reproaches; in his foreseeing the greatest of dangers, and worst of mischiefs that could arrive to man, yet cheerfully encountering and firmly sustaining them; sustaining all the violent oppositions and assaults which the most virulent malice and envy enflamed with superstition and blind zeal could set against him.

Wherein a most quiet and peaceable disposition, apparent from his never attempting any resistance, or any revenge upon provocation of frequent great affronts and injuries; from his never raising any tumults, nor fomenting any quarrels, nor meddling with any litigious matters, nor encroaching upon any man's right or office; by his ready compliance with received customs, by his paying tribute, although not due from him, to prevent offence; by his frequent instructions and exhortations to peace, to innocence, to patience, to due obedience, to performing due respect to superiours, and paying customs to governours; to the yielding a docile ear, and an observance to those who *sate in Moses his chair.*

Wherein an exceeding meekness and gentleness, demonstrated in all his conversation; in resenting very moderately, or rather not resenting at all most unjust hatreds, outrageous calumnies, bitter reproaches and contumelies from his adversaries; very perverse neglects and ingratitude from multitudes of people; many infirmities, stupidities, distrusts, basenesses and treacheries from his own nearest friends and followers. In his passing over and easily pardoning the greatest offences committed against him, yea sometime extenuating and excusing them. In the mildness of his censures, expostulations and reproofs; in his tempering the fierce zeal, hard censure, and rigorous proceeding against persons unhappy, or faulty; in his tender pity of all persons in any want, distress or trouble; in his ear-nest commiseration and bewailing the vengeance he foresaw impendent on his persecutors, and in his praying for their pardon.

Wherein a marvellous humility and lowliness of mind expressed by his not seeking * honour or applause from men, but shunning and rejecting it; his not assuming to himself, but ascribing all to God, and referring all to his glory; by his making no ostentation of his miraculous power and high endowments, but, so far as would comport with the prosecution of his main purpose (the glory and service of God, the good and welfare of men) carefully suppressing and concealing them; in his, without dissatisfaction or discouragement, bearing scorn, and contempt, and obloquy;

* Matt. 8. 20.
2 Cor. 8. 9.
Luke 2. 40, 52.
Matt. 9. 4, 12.
10. 25. 22. 18.
16. 1. 19. 3.
22. 18. 35. 46.
John 8. 6.
Matt. 21. 27.
22. 18. 34.
John 6. 1. 8. 16.
10. 39.
Luke 20. 3. 22.
4. 30. 12. 22.
Matt. 12. 14.
Matt. 19. 5.
Mark 8. 30.
Luke 12. 14.
13. 2. 14. 7.
12. 18. 17.
19. 11.
John 7. 6. 16.
4. 12. 11. 54.
16. 27. 4. 10.
† Mat. 13. 54.
Mark 7. 37.
John 12. 42.
7. 15. 7. 46.
Matt. 7. 28.
Luke 2. 47.
4. 42.
John 8. 40. 7.
25. 26. 7.
Luke 20. 46.
13. 52. 16. 15.
Matt. 12. 14.
15. 13. 23. 19.
15. 6. 14. 8. 24.
Luke 19. 45.
John 2. 15.
Luke 9. 22, 51.
18. 32. 22. 15.
Matt. 16. 21.
20. 17.
Mark 10. 33.
Matt. 26. 52.
Luke 12. 14.
Matt. 8. 4.
Luke 17. 14.
Matt. 17. 27.
Matt. 9. 23.
— 10. 16.
Matt. 22. 21.
Matt. 23. 2.
Matt. 11. 39.
Matt. 9. 4, 34.
12. 25. 10. 25.
12. 24.
John 15. 19.
10. 32.
Luke 4. 24.
Matt. 26. 50.
12. 25. 14. 31.
John 7. 12.
7. 20. 8. 48.
10. 20.
Matt. 17. 17.
26. 56.
Luke 22. 46.
23. 34. 22. 51.
Luke 9. 55.
John 8. 7.
Matt. 9. 36.
14. 14. 15. 32.
Luke 7. 13.
Luke 9. 41.
13. 34.
John 13. 21.
Luke 23. 34.
* John 5. 41.
8. 50. 54. 6.
15. 8. 28. 31.
4. 17. 4.

Luk. 7. 16, 29. obloquy; in his willing condescension to the meanest offices and employments;
 9. 43. 8. 56. in his free and familiar conversation with all sorts of people, with the lowest and
 8. 39. 17. 18. most despicable, with the worst and most odious, for their good; he not despi-
 18. 43. sing the poorest or vilest wretch, who seemed capable of receiving any benefit
 Mat. 8. 4. 9. 30. from him; in his easiness to be entreated, and readiness to comply with the de-
 12. 16. 19. 17. sires of any man imploring succour or relief from him; in his being ready not
 Mark 5. 43. only to oblige, but to be obliged and receive courtesies from any man; to an-
 8. 23. swer the invitation of a *Pharisee*, or of a *Publican*; to accept favourably the well
 Matt. 9. 24. intended respect of a poor woman; in the softness and sweetness of his language
 John 13. 4. to all men, particularly to his disciples; (*Be of good courage Daughter; Son be of*
 Matt. 9. 10. *good cheer; I say unto you my friends; little children, I am a little while with you;*
 8. 3. 19. such was his style, and conversation toward his inferiours.)
 Luke 5. 29. Wherein an unparalleld patience in contentedly and cheerfully, through all
 15. 2. 19. 5. the course of his life, undertaking and undergoing whatever by God's will and
 7. 36. 11. 37. providence was imposed on him, how grievous and distastful soever to humane
 John 12. 7. apprehension or sense; the extreme penury, the hardest toil, the vilest disgra-
 Matt. 26. 10. ces, the most bitter pains and anguishes incident to body or mind, the most hor-
 Matt. 9. 2. 22. rid and most sorrowful of deaths, all these aggravated by the conscience of his
 Luke 12. 4. own clearest innocence, by the extreme ingratitude of those who misused him,
 John 15. 14. by the sense of God's displeasure for the sin of man, by all the embittering con-
 13. 33. siderations which a most lively piety and tender charity suggested; in submitting
 John 18. 11. to all this most freely and most calmly, without any regret, any disturbance.
 12. 27. Eph. 3. 19. Wherein an unexpressible and unconceivable charity (*a charity indeed which*
 Matt. 26. 39. *surpasseth knowledge*, as St. Paul speaketh) evidenced in the constant strain and
 Matt. 8. 20. tenour of his life, passing through all his designs, all his words, and all his a-
 (1 Cor. 8. 9.) ctions; for *διὰ τὸν εὐαγγελισμὸν* (as St. Peter says in the *Acts*) *he did nothing else,*
 but go about doing good, and benefitting men; curing their diseases, relieving their
 wants, instructing their minds, reforming their manners, drawing them to God
 and goodness, disposing them to the attainment of everlasting bliss and salvati-
 on. 'Tis love, we may observe, which was the soul that animated and actua-
 ted him in all things; which carried him with unwearied resolution and alacri-
 ty through all the cruel hardships and toils, through all the dismal crosses and
 ignominies he endured: His life was in effect but one continual expression of
 charity, (differently exerting it self according to various opportunities, and cir-
 cumstances, and needs of men) the which was consummated, and sealed by his
 death; the highest instance of charity that could be; for, *Greater love hath no*
 John 15. 13. *man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.*

Wherein finally (in which life, I say, of Jesus) all holiness, all virtue, all
 goodness (sutable to him, who was to be not only the teacher, and the persua-
 der of the best life, but a living standard and pattern thereof; who was to me-
 rit of God in man's behalf, to conciliate God's favour towards us, and appease
 his anger against us) do shine and sparkle with a beauty, and a lustre transcen-
 ding all expression. All which particulars might, were it now proper and sea-
 sonable, be thoroughly declared by instances extant in the Evangelical history.
 So that the characteristical qualities of the *Messias* do clearly and abundantly a-
 gree to Jesus our Lord.

His performances should next be considered and compared; but the time
 doth not admit that we should now proceed any farther.

Now, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon
 the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVIII.
That Jesus is the True Messias.

ACTS IX. 22.

But Saul increased more in strength, and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus ----- Proving that this is the very Christ.

IN conformity to S. Paul's design and practice implied here, I have formerly propounded to explain, and perswade these particulars. 1. What is the right notion and reason of this name or title *Christ*. 2. That there was destined to come into the world, a Person, who signally according to that right notion, should be *the Christ*. 3. That *Jesus*, whom we avow, is that Person, *the very Christ*. 4. In what manner, and upon what accounts the New Testament representeth *Jesus* to be the *Christ*. 5. What application the Point requireth.

In prosecution of which particulars, having dispatched the *first* and *second*, I did enter into the *third*, which is of highest consequence, beginning to declare that *Jesus*, our Lord, is the *Christ*, from the circumstances of his coming into the world, and from his personal qualifications; which having in some measure performed, I shall now proceed to declare the same from the exact correspondency of his undertakings and performances to those, which, according to ancient pre-significations, and prophecies, the *Messias* was designed to undertake and accomplish; together with the consequences of what the *Messias* was to do, and what answerably *Jesus* did effect.

1. One great performance of the *Messias*, was by inspiration, and in the name of God to make a complete discovery of divine truth; to publish a Law of universal and perpetual obligation; to institute a Religion consummate in all respects, which should correct the faults, and supply the defects of all precedent dispensations, which should therefore be, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which no other revelation was to be expected: *I will* (said Moses of him) *put* Deut. 18. 18, *words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him, and it* 19: *shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:* By him Esay foretold, that God *shall reach* Isa. 2: 2: *us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths, for out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem:* By him Jeremy signified, that God *would* Jer. 31. 34. *put his law into the inward parts of men, and write it in their hearts; it was, as* Ezek. 36. 27. *it is said in Daniel, part of his work to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal* Dan. 9: 24. *up the vision, and prophecy; and his days in the Prophets are commonly stiled the last days, because it seemeth, of the perfection of his doctrine, and immutability of his law; where such an entire instruction, and final resolution in all points was commonly expected by the Jews, as the Samaritan woman did intimate; I know* (said she, according to the current persuasions then) *that the Messias cometh,* John 4. 25. *and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.*

Now accordingly *Jesus*, (our hope, and Author of our faith) hath taught a Tim. 1. 1. Doctrine, hath proclaimed a Law, hath instituted a Religion, which upon strict and careful examination will be found most perfect in all respects; such in its nature as cannot but indispensibly oblige all that understand it, such as is worthy

of God, and futable to his designs of glorifying himself, and obliging his creature; in short, he hath been Author of such an Institution, as may be demonstrated the most excellent and complete that can be. For, (briefly to shew this by considering the main, if not all imaginable excellencies of any Religion, Law or Doctrine) it is impossible that any Doctrine should assign a more true, proper, complete notion or character of God himself, more congruous to what reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, the purest tradition attesteth, or common experience doth intimate concerning God; more apt to breed in our hearts the highest affection and reverence toward him, or to engage us in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him; none can ascribe unto God higher perfections of nature, can more ascribe unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, can better commend and justify to us all his actions and proceedings, can represent him more amiable in his goodness, more terrible in his justice, more glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence; can consequently better direct or dispose us to render unto him a worship worthy of him, and acceptable to him; can also therefore with more security and advantage commend unto us the imitation of him in our disposition and demeanour.

Nor could any doctrine more clearly and fully inform us concerning our selves; concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, final; what the dignity of our nature is, for what purposes we were designed and framed, wherein our happiness doth consist, what shall be our state after death, how we shall be judged, and dealt with then; the knowledge of which particulars is of so immense consequence for the satisfaction of our minds, and direction of our lives; concerning which therefore men in all times have so earnestly inquired and disputed, without any sure resolution but from hence.

Nor could a more accurate rule of life (more congruous to reason, and futable to our nature, or perfective thereof; more conducive to our welfare, and our content; more apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all) have been prescribed; nothing can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are the duties of piety (consisting in love, reverence, gratitude, devotion, obedience, faith and repentance toward God) which Christianity doth require. No directions concerning our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren can be imagined comparable to those (those of hearty love, good-will, beneficence, compassion, readiness to forgive, meekness, peaceableness, and the like) which the Christian law enjoineeth. No precepts or advices concerning the management of our selves (the ordering our souls and our bodies in their respective functions and fruitions) can be devised more agreeable to sound reason, more productive of true welfare, and real delight unto us, than are those of being humble and modest in our conceits, calm and composed in our passions, sober and temperate in our enjoyments, patient and contented in our state, with the like, which the Christian Doctrine doth inculcate. No other method can raise us up so near to heaven and happiness as that which we here learn, of abstracting and elevating our minds above the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; the fixing our thoughts, affections and hopes upon the concerns of a better future state.

*Negotiosa
scrupulositates
Tert. in Marc.
lib. 2.*

No Religion also can be purer from superstitious alloys, or freer from useless encumbrances (or from, as *Tertullian* calleth them, *busie scrupulosities*) than is this, (such as it is in its native simplicity, and as it came from its Author, before the pragmatistical curiosity, or domineering humour, or covetous designings of men had tampered with it) it onely requiring a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties plainly necessary or profitable; the ritual observances it enjoineeth, being as very few in number, in nature simple and easie to observe, so evidently reasonable, very decent and very useful, able to instruct us in, apt to excite us to the practice of most wholesome duties.

No Religion also can have the like advantage of setting before us a living copy, and visible standard of good practice, affording so compendious an instruction, and so efficacious an incitement to all piety and virtue: so absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for our imitation, and withal so strongly engaging us thereto, as the example of *Jesus*, our Lord, such as it is in the *Gospels* represented to us.

Neither

Neither can any Religion build our duty upon more solid grounds, or draw it from better principles, or drive it to better ends, or press it with more valid inducements than ours; which builds it upon conformity to the perfect nature of God, and to the dictates of his infallible wisdom, upon the holy will, and most just authority of our natural Lord, and Maker; which draweth it from love, reverence and gratitude to God, from a hearty good-will to men, and from a sober regard to our own true welfare; which propoundeth God's honour, our neighbour's edification, and our own salvation as the principal ends of action; which stirreth up good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble God, express our thankfulness, and discharge our duty to him, obtain his mercy and favour, acquire present comfort of mind, and future bliss, avoid regrets of conscience here, and endless torments hereafter.

Neither can any Doctrine afford more encouragements to the endeavours of practising it than doth this, which tendereth sufficient help and ability toward the performance of whatever it enjoineeth; offering (upon our seeking them, or asking for them) God's infallible wisdom to direct us in our darkneses and doubts, God's almighty strength to assist us in our temptations and combats, God's loving Spirit to comfort us in our afflictions and distresses.

Nor can any Doctrine in a more sure, or kindly manner appease and satisfy a man's conscience, so as to produce therein a well-grounded hope, and solid comfort; to heal the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict, than doth this, which assureth us, that God Almighty, notwithstanding all our offences committed against him, is not only reconcileable to us, but desirous to become our friend; that he doth upon our repentance, and compliance with his gentle terms, receive us unto perfect grace and favour, discharging all our guilts and debts however contracted; that our endeavours to serve and please God, although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere, shall be accepted and rewarded by him.

Such is the Doctrine, Law and Religion of *Jesus*; expressed in a most uneffected and perspicuous way, with all the gravity and simplicity of speech, with all the majesty and authority of proposal becoming divine truth; so excellent, and so complete in all respects, that it is beyond the imagination of man to conceive any thing better, yea, I dare say, repugnant to the nature of things that there should be any other way of Religion (different substantially from it) so very good. God himself, we may presume to say, cannot infuse truer notions concerning himself, or concerning us, cannot reveal more noble, or more useful truths; cannot prescribe better laws or rules, cannot afford more proper means and aids, cannot propound more equal and reasonable terms, cannot offer higher encouragements and rewards, cannot discover his mind in a more excellent way than he hath done by *Jesus*, for his own glory and service, for our benefit and happiness: So that hence we may reasonably infer, that the Doctrine taught, the Law promulgated, the Religion instituted by *Jesus* in God's name, are the very same which the predictions concerning the *Messias* do refer unto, as the last, which should ever come from God, most full and perfect, universally and perpetually obliging.

2. Thus in general the Prophets spake concerning the *Messias* his Doctrine, and so that of *Jesus* correspondeth thereto: but of that Doctrine particularly it was signified, that it should be very comfortable, joyful and acceptable to Mankind; as containing a Declaration (peculiar thereto) of God's kind and gracious Intentions toward us, overtures of special Mercy and Love; dispensations of all sorts of Spiritual Blessings; the Pardon and Abolition of Sins committed, Peace and Satisfaction of Conscience, deliverance from Spiritual Slaveryes and Captivities: *Rejoyce greatly, O Daughter of Sion, shout O Daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee;* So *Zechary* speaketh of his coming, and implieth the joyful purport of his Message: And, *How beautiful (saith Esay) upon the Mountains are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings, that publisheth Peace, that bringeth good Tidings of good, that publisheth Salvation, that saith unto Sion, thy God reigneth?* and, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath appointed me to preach good Tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of Vengeance (or*

Zech. 9. 9.

Isa. 52. 7.

Isa. 61. 1.

42. 1, 3.

of Recompence, as the LXX render it) of our God; to comfort all that mourn, *arratōdes* to give unto them that mourn in Sion Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, *oi.* the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness. It is a part of what God in Jer. 31. 34. *remy* promised to dispense by him: *I will forgive their Iniquity, and I will remember their Sin no more.* It is one of the Messiah his performances — to finish Transgression, and to make an end of Sins, and to make reconciliation for Iniquity; to Ezek. 36. sprinkle clean water on God's People, and to save them from their Uncleanesses. In fine, the Prophet Zechary saith of his time, that In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for Sin, and for Zechar. 13. 1. Uncleaness.

Now to all this the preaching of Jesus did exactly correspond; it being indeed, as it was named, a Gospel, or Message of good and joy; declaring the special good-will of God, and his merciful willingness to be reconciled to Mankind; offering Peace and Pardon to all that are sensible of their Guilt, and penitent for their Sin; imparting Rest, Comfort and Liberty to all that are weary and afflicted with Spiritual Burthens, Grievances and Slaveries; taking off all grievous yokes of Superstition, Servility and Sin; and in their stead imposing a no less sweet and pleasant, than just and reasonable Obedience; ministring all sorts of blessings needful for our succour, relief, ease, content and welfare; wholly breathing sweetest love (all kinds of love; love between God and man, between man and man, between man and his own conscience) filling the hearts of those who sincerely embrace and comply with it, with present joy, and raising in them glad-some hopes of future bliss. It was indeed the most joyous sound that ever entred into man's ears, the most welcome news that ever was reported upon earth; news of a certain and perfect salvation from all the enemies of our welfare, from all the causes of mischief and misery to us; well therefore deserving that auspicious gratulation from the Angel: *Behold I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all People.*

3. Collateral unto, or coincident with those performances (the teaching such a doctrine, publishing such a law, dispensing such blessings) was the formal institution, and establishment of a new everlasting covenant (different from all precedent covenants, and swallowing them up in its perfection) a covenant between God and man, wherein God, entring into a most strict alliance and relation with us, should be pleased to dispense the blessings of spiritual illumination and assistance, of mercy and favour, of salvation and felicity; wherein we in way of condition, according to obligations of justice and gratitude, should engage to return unto God by hearty repentance, and to persist in faithful obedience to him: Of such a Covenant the Messiah was to be the Messenger and Mediator, or the Angel thereof (as the Prophet Malachy speaketh, alluding it seems to that Angel of God's presence, who ordained the Jewish Law, and conducted the Israelites toward the promised land) of which Covenant and its Mediator God in Esay thus spake: *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand; and I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house — and of the same he again: Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David — Behold I have given him a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people: So in general he speaketh thereof, and inviteth thereto; then a special part thereof he expresseth thus: Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.* Of the same Covenant God in Ezekiel speaketh thus: *I will set up one shepherd over them — and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them — and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore — they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.* Of the same God thus declareth in Jeremy, most fully and plainly reckoning the particular blessings tendered therein: *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant, that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but this shall be the covenant, that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord,*

Lord, I will put my Law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their Iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more; which words signify the tenour of that Covenant on God's part to import, that God would impart a full and clear discovery of his will unto them, whom it should concern; that he would afford to them all requisite means and helps qualifying them for the performance of their duty; that he would bestow on them (complying with the terms of this Covenant, and performing their duty) an entire remission of all their sins, with an assurance of his constant and perpetual favour.

Now that *Jesus* did institute such a Covenant, wherein all the benefits promised on God's part, and all the duties required on our parts, do punctually correspond to the terms of that predestined by the Prophets, is apparent by the whole tenour of the Christian Gospel; wherein a full declaration of God's will is held forth, so that no man (except out of wilfulness or negligence) can be ignorant thereof; wherein, upon condition of faith and repentance, God's mercy and pardon are exhibited and offered to all; wherein the communication of God's holy Spirit of grace (for directing and assisting the embracers of this Covenant in the practice of their duty) is promised and dispensed; wherein on our part faith in God (or heartily returning to him) and faithful observance of God's laws are required; wherein God declareth a most favourable regard and love (together with very near and endearing relations) to those who undertake and conform to his terms; of which new Covenant *Jesus* is represented the *Angel*, the *Mediator*, the *Sponsor*; having by his preaching declared it, by his merits and intercessions purchased and procured it, by his blood ratified, and assured it to us.

Luke 24. 47.
Acts 5. 31. 2.
38.
Heb. 10. 29.

Heb. 9. 11.
12. 24. 7. 22.
8. 6.
1 Tim. 2. 5.

4. In coincidence also with those performances, it is declared, that the *Messias* should erect a Kingdom spiritual in nature, universal in extent, and perpetual in duration; by the power and virtue whereof the enemies of God's people should be curb'd and quell'd; the subjects of which should live together in amity and peace, in safety and prosperity; wherein truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. The chief testimonies of ancient Scripture predicting this Kingdom I had occasion before to mention, and shall not repeat them now; only concerning the nature and extent thereof I shall add somewhat, serving for illustration and proof of our main purpose.

That it was to be a spiritual Kingdom (not a visible dominion over the bodies and estates of men, managed by external force and co-action, but a government of mens hearts and consciences by secret inspirations, and moral instructions or persuasions) may be several ways collected, and argued; it appeareth from the temper and disposition of its Founder, who was to be a *Prince of Peace*; of a peaceable, meek, patient and humble disposition; it may be inferred from his condition, which was not to be a state of external grandeur and magnificence, but of poverty and affliction; for he was to be as he is described, mean and despicable in appearance; having *no form or comeliness, no beauty, that when we should see him, we should desire him*; being a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; it also followeth from the events happening to him, which were not to conquer and triumph openly in view of carnal eyes; but to be despised and rejected, to be afflicted, oppressed and slaughtered by men; the same we may learn from the manner of its establishment and propagation; which was not to be effected by force and violence, but by virtue of a quiet and gentle instruction; by reasonable words, not by hard blows: So doth the Prophet signify, when he saith of the *Messias*, that, *With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked*: not by force of hands, or terrour of arms, not in furious and bloody combats, but by the spiritual rod of his mouth; with the soft breath of his lips he was to slay the wicked, converting them unto righteousness: So doth *Daniel* also imply when he saith, that a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, should break in pieces, and consume all other Kingdoms. Yea the nature thereof it self doth argue the same; for the laws enjoined, and duties required, the blessings ministred, and rewards propounded therein are purely spiritual, not relating to a temporal state, yea hardly consisting with secular domination;

Isa. 9. 6.

Isa. 53. 2, 3, 4.
7. 49. 7. 50. 6.

Isa. 11. 4.

Dan. 2. 44, 45.

nation; as may appear by attending to its fundamental constitution; or to the covenant settled between the Prince and subjects thereof; wherein the divine spirit and grace, light and knowledge, mercy and pardon for sins, comfort of mind, and peace of conscience, God's special love and favour, things merely spiritual, are expressly promised; but worldly power, wealth and prosperity are pretermitted; and thence may justly be presumed no ingredients, or appurtenances thereof. Indeed the constitution of a temporal, or worldly Kingdom, with visible pomp and lustre, such as the Jews (a grossly conceited, and sensually affected people) did, mistaking the Prophets, desire and expect, had been a thing, as very agreeable to the carnal or childish opinions of men, so in reasonable esteem of no considerable value, benefit or use to mankind: such a domination could only have concerned the mortal part, and temporal state of man; it could only have procured some trivial conveniences for our bodies, or gratifications to our sense: the settlement also, and preservation of such a Kingdom (according to that vast extent, and long duration which the Prophets imply) seemeth, without quite altering the whole frame of humane nature, scarce possible; and reasons there are obvious enough, why it would not be expedient, or beneficial for men: But the founding and upholding a spiritual Kingdom (such as we described) is evidently of inestimable benefit to the nobler and more divine part of men, may serve to promote the eternal welfare of our souls; may easily without changing the natural appetites of men, or disturbing the world, be carried on any where, and subsist for ever by the occult influences of divine grace; it consequently is most worthy of God to design and accomplish. Such a Kingdom therefore was meant by the Prophets, being indeed no other than a Church, or society of persons, with unanimous consent, heartily acknowledging the One true God of Israel, Maker of heaven and earth, for their Sovereign Prince and Law-giver; submitting themselves in all their actions to his laws and commands, expecting protection and recompence of their obedience from him.

As for the general extent of this Kingdom, and the Messiah his proceedings in settling and propagating it, that is also very perspicuously and copiously represented in the ancient Prophets, who declare that by him mankind (then immersed in deep ignorance and error, in wretched impiety and wickedness, in utter estrangement and aversion from God and goodness) should be reduced to the knowledge, worship and obedience of God; that they should be received into God's protection, and should partake of his special favour; that all nations of men should by the Messiah be enlightened with saving knowledge, and converted to the practice of true righteousness; that all men every where (all that would regard and observe his word, all in God's design and desire, in effect a numerous company of men) should by his means be aggregated to God's Church, and rendered God's people; enjoying the benefits and privileges suitable to that state or relation: In expressing these things the ancient Scriptures are very pregnant and copious; *Moses*, in that most divine Song (endited by God himself, and uttered in his name) which seemeth to contain the history, and the continual fate of the Jewish people doth foretell this, and concludeth his Song therewith; as with the last matter, which should happen during God's special relation to that people, importing the period of *Judaism*, or of the *Israelitish* Theocracy. *Rejoyce* (saith he) *O ye nations with his people.* God in the second Psalm thus speaketh to the Messiah: *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the most parts of the earth for thy possession:* and in the 72. Psalm; *His name* (as said) *shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed; he shall have dominion also from sea, to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; and elsewhere; All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee: and, I will* (saith God in *Ezay* concerning him) *give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation to the ends of the earth:* and, *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; The Lord hath made bare his holy arm, in the eyes of all nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God:* and, *He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the Isles* (that is the *European Nations*) *shall wait for his law: and, In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things,*

Dent. 32. 43.
Rom. 15. 10.
Psalm. 2. 8.

Psalm. 72. 17.
8. 1.

Psalm. 22. 27.
86. 9.

Isa. 46. 9.
Acts 13. 47.

Isa. 40. 5.
52. 10.
Luke 3. 6.

Isa. 42. 4.
Rom. 15. 2.

a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined; and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations: and, In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people, to it shall the Gentiles seek, and its rest shall be glorious: and, I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not; I said, behold me, behold me unto a nation, that was not called by my name: and, It shall come to pass in the last days (saith both E-
Isa. 25. 6, 7.
Isa. 11. 10.
Isa. 65. 1.
Rom. 9. 24.
Isa. 2. 2.
Mic. 4. 1.
 say and Micah in the same words) that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it: From the rising of the Sun (saith God in Malachy) even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: and, I (saith God in Hosea) will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say unto them, which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God: In the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God: and, The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, (saith God to his Church) the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee: Fear not, for I am with thee, I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West; I will say to the North give up, and to the South keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: and, Sing, O barren, that thou didst not bear (tis said to the Gentile Church) break forth into singing, and cry aloud thou that didst not travel with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord; Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations — for thou shalt break forth on the right hand, and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles — For thy Maker is thine husband (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel; The Lord of the whole earth shall be called — The wilderness, and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, &c.
Isa. 43. 5.
Isa. 54. 1.
Gal. 4. 26.
Vid. Amos 9. 11, 12.
Acts 15. 15.
Isa. 35. 1.

Such is the nature, and such the extent of the Messias his Kingdom; now that Jesus hath erected and settled a Kingdom of a spiritual and heavenly nature (the which is therefore in his Gospel styled the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Christ, the Kingdom that was to come) whereof God is the absolute Sovereign; the throne whereof is in heaven above, which beareth sway in the souls of men; wherein God governeth in effectual manner (most righteously and sweetly, with admirable wisdom, justice and clemency; with mighty power also, and awful authority) according to most excellent laws, by his holy word, and powerful spirit; proposing most precious rewards to the obedient subjects thereof, and threatening dreadful punishments to the rebellious; protecting and saving the faithful people from all their enemies (from the powers of darkness, from the temptations, allurements, menaces of the flesh and the world here, from death and hell hereafter) that also Jesus (who as Mediator between God and man, doth according to the Gospel, by authority derived from God, and in God's name, administer the government hereof) hath in effect been avowed as Lord and King; that his authority hath had great efficacy upon the minds and consciences of men; what noble trophies over sin and wickedness his word hath raised; in what glory and majesty through many ages he hath reigned; is evident from obvious records of history, and from plain experience.

The extent of this spiritual Empire raised by our Lord (of that doctrine which he taught, of that reformation which he introduced, of that Church, or spiritual society, knit together in faith and charity, which he founded of that whole dispensation, which he managed) is also thoroughly commensurate to the extent of whatever in these kinds the Messias was to achieve: The Empire of Jesus in its nature and design, according to right and obligation, is declared universal and boundless, co-extended, with the world it self, and comprehending all generations of men; all nations being summoned to come under the wings of its jurisdiction; all persons being invited to partake the benefits, and enjoy the privileges thereof: The Lord, and Judge of all men; the Saviour, and Redeemer of the world; the common light of men, and Captain of humane life; are titles, which Jesus assumed to himself: All things are delivered to me of my Father; Thou hast given him power over all flesh; All judgment is committed to the Son; yea, All power
Acts 10. 36.
Matt. 11. 27.

John 17. 2. 5. power is given unto me in heaven and earth, such is the authority he claimeth, and
 22. 3. 35. asserteth to himself: Go into the World, preach the Gospel to every creature: Go,
 Matt. 28. 18. and discipline all nations, baptizing them — such was the commission and
 Mark 16. 15. charge delivered by Jesus to his Officers, and Ministers: The grace of God which
 Matt. 28. 19. bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men: The times of ignorance God having wink-
 Luke 24. 46. ed at, doth now invite all men every where to repent: God was in Christ reconciling
 Tit. 2. 11. the World unto himself, not imputing their sins: God our Saviour will have all men
 Acts 17. 30. to be saved, and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth — The Gospel hath
 2 Cor. 5. 19. been preached to every creature under heaven: so do the Apostles declare the latitude
 1 Tim. 2. 4. of the Evangelical dispensation according to its nature and
 Col. 1. 23. design: So that well may we cry out with Clem. Alex. Hearken ye that are afar off, hearken ye that are near, the word is not

hid from any 'tis a common light, it shineth to all men: there
 is no Cimmerian in respect to the Gospel. So in design, and of right is Jesus his
 doctrine and dispensation common to all Nations, and to all persons; all in duty
 are obliged to entertain it; all may have the benefit thereof, who are fit, and
 willing to imbrace it; it doth not indeed obtrude its benefits upon unwilling, and
 thence unworthy persons; it useth no unkindly violence, or rude compulsion;
 but it alloweth, it inviteth, it intreateth, it engageth all men to come, excluding
 only those from a participation therein, who will not hear its call; who do not
 like, or love it.

In effect also this Kingdom hath been very large and vast, a considerable part
 of the world having very soon been subjugated by its virtue, and having sub-
 mitted thereto. As the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the
 West, so shall the coming (or presence) of the Son of man be: said He concerning
 the suddain, and effectual spreading of his doctrine; and the event answered his
 prediction: for the Evangelical light did in an instant dart it self all about, so
 as in many places to dispell the night of ignorance, and to dissipate the fogs of
 wickedness: so that the utmost ends of the earth (of which according to the most
 literal sense we our selves are a most proper instance) are come under the possessi-
 on and government of Jesus, are reduced to the acknowledgment and veneration
 of the only true God; do partake of God's favour, and hope in his mercy; do
 with good conscience (in that measure, which is expectable from the natural in-
 firmity and pravity of man, in various degrees, some more, some less strictly)
 serve God, and obey his laws: A Church, and spiritual Sion (spread over divers
 regions and countries, consisting of several nations and languages) compacted in
 good order, and sweet communion, hath through a long course of time visibly
 flourished in competent degrees of peace, prosperity and glory; commending and
 cherishing true religion, charity and sobriety; offering continual sacrifices of ho-
 ly devotion unto God, celebrating the divine name and praises; producing many
 noble examples of all piety and virtue; a Church in all regards adequate to the
 propheticall expressions concerning that which was out of the whole world to be
 collected, and constituted by the Messiah.

Chryl. Tom. 6.
 Orat. 61.
 page 634.

5. If we do singly compare the particular consequences and successes of the
 Messiah his performances, expressed by the Prophets; we shall find an exact cor-
 respondence to what hath followed the undertakings and performances of our Lord.
 They tell us, that great opposition should be made against it by the Jews, and
 by the * Gentiles.

* Psal. 2. 1.
 vid. Chryl.
 Tom. 7. Orat.
 61. p. 637.
 Pl. 72. 11. 17.

They tell us, that the Messiah his person should be acknowledged, worshipped,
 and blessed all over the world: — All nations (say they) shall serve him, — all
 nations shall call him blessed: This we see for almost 1700 years abundantly per-
 formed in respect to Jesus, by the daily services of praise and thanksgiving yield-
 ed to him in the Universal Church.

Ila. 11. 9.

They say, that the knowledge of God shall be far extended, and diffused over
 the world; The earth, say they, shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters
 cover the sea; this we see fulfilled by the large propagation of Christian doctrine.

Psal. 72. 7.
 85. 11.

They affirm, that righteousness in the times of the Messiah should commonly
 prosper, and be in high request, according to that: In his days shall the righteous
 flourish: so we see, that virtue and piety have ever since Jesus commended them
 to the world, enjoyed much repute, having been practised among the professors of
 his Religion in such degrees, and according to such manner as the condition of
 this

this world, the humours of men, and the nature of humane affairs do admit ; nor reasonably can any prophecies be understood to mean farther.

They farther intimate, that upon the entertainment of the *Messias* his doctrine and law, abundance of peace and concord, of love and charity, of innocence and justice should ensue ; so that the fellow-subjects of this Kingdom, although of different states and complexions (the *wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the lion and the ox, the ass and the young child* ; that is, the rich and the poor, the mighty and the weak, the fierce and the gentle, the crafty and the simple sorts of men) should live and converse together amicably, safely and pleasantly, without molesting, wronging, oppressing and devouring ; but rather helping, and benefiting each other : *They shall not* (saith the Prophet) *hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain* : To the making good of which particular, the doctrine of *Jesus* doth temper and compose the minds of those who do truly understand and embrace it : Such as are Christians indeed (careful followers of *Jesus* his rules and example) are thereby disposed to maintain peace and amity between themselves, yea, to perform all offices of charity and kindness to one another, although their conditions in the world, their complexions, their endowments and abilities be however different ; for the Christian doctrine representeth all that embrace it as fellow-servants of the same Lord, as brethren and children of the same Father, as members of the same body, as objects of the same divine regard and love, as partakers of the same privileges, professors of the same truth, consorts of the same hope, co-heirs of the same glory and happiness, as thence united and allied to one another by the strictest bands, and most endearing relations ; hence it suppleth the stoutest heart, and sweetneth the fiercest tempers ; it inclineth persons of highest state, power, wealth, knowledge to condescensive humility, and meekness toward the meanest ; this reason presently occurring to every Christian mind, that no Christian Brother is indeed contemptible, can without folly, may without sin be contemned : Whence although *Jesus* his doctrine hath not quite removed wars and contentions out of the world, yea, not out of that part thereof which doth acknowledge him (for that were a thing impossible, without a total alteration of humane nature, or rooting out of it those appetites of pride, voluptuousness, self-love, and covetousness, which are the seeds of strife ; the effecting which it cannot be supposed that the Prophets did intend) yet hath it done considerably toward it ; it hath disposed many persons (many great and considerable in the world) to a very just, innocent and peaceable Conversation ; it hath kindled ardent love and compassion toward all mankind in many hearts, it hath produced great fruits of charity and bounty in persons of all sorts, it hath had no small influence upon the common state of things, causing humane affairs to be managed with much equity and gentleness, restraining outrageous iniquity and oppression.

It was also farther particularly foretold, that great Princes and Potentates should submit to the *Messias*, seriously avowing his authority over them, yielding veneration to his name, and obedience to his laws ; with their power and wealth promoting and encouraging the Religion instituted by him, defending and cherishing his faithful people : *All Kings* (saith the Psalmist of him) *shall fall before him ; all nations shall do him service* : To a servant of rulers (saith *Esaias* also of him) *Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall do worship* : And the same Prophet concerning his Church ; *Kings* (saith he) *shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queens thy nursing mothers ; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet ; — The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightness of thy rising ; — The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their Kings shall minister unto thee ; — Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of Kings ; — The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all Kings thy glory*. All this we see plainly to have been accomplished, for that soon the highest of earthly powers did submit and stoop thereto ; that many great Princes (great and glorious as even the world hath known any ; such as *Constantine, Theodosius, Charlemagne*, and others of like illustrious renown) have willingly entertained *Jesus* his doctrine, and gladly undergone his yoke ; that long successions of Emperors and Kings, through the best frequented and most civilized part of the World, have seriously professed themselves

Οὐ γὰρ ἀρνησάμενοι εἶναι τὸν μόνον
καὶ ἀληθινόν Θεόν, ὑμᾶς περὶ
Conit. apud Euf. de Vi. Conit. 3.

Ἐγὼ δὲ συνδεδεμένοι ὑμῶν καὶ
ἐκβολλόμενοι εἶναι καίτοι. Conit. apud
Socr. 1. 9. in Epist. ad Eccl. Alex.
andr.

selves the subjects and servants of Jesus; expressing humble adoration of his person, and yielding observance to his laws; maintaining the profession of his Religion by their power, supporting the Ministers of it by their bounty, cherishing the practice thereof by manifold helps and encouragements; they have seemed ambitious of titles drawn from performances of this nature, affecting and glorying to be styled

most Christian Kings, Catholick Kings, Defenders of the Faith, and Sons of the Church.

It was also to be a particular consequence of what the Messias should do, that by virtue of his performances Idolatry (that is the worship of wicked Spirits, or of fictitious Deities) should in a conspicuous manner be vanquished, driven away, and destroyed; the worship of the only true God being substituted in its room:

Isa. 2. 17, 18.
Ezek. 36. 25.
Zech. 13. 2.

The Lord alone (saith Esay concerning his time) shall be exalted in that day, and the Idols he shall utterly abolish: and, It shall come to pass (saith Zechary) in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the name of the Idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered; and also I will call the Prophets, and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land.

John 12. 31.
16. 11.
Eph. 2. 2.
2 Cor. 4. 8.
Col. 1. 13.
Acts 26. 18.
Matt. 12. 29.
Luke 11. 21.
Col. 2. 15.
John 12. 31.
16. 11.
1 John 3. 8.

Now this we know was soon effected by the doctrine of our Lord, in a most remarkable manner: Idolatry in all places where it came, did flee and vanish before it; the Devil's frauds (whereby he so long had abused and befooled mankind) being detected, and that authority, which he had usurped over the World, being utterly disavowed; all the pack of infernal Apostate Spirits being not only rejected and disclaimed, but scorned and detested. Jesus (as the Gospel telleth us, and as Experience confirmeth) did combat the strong one, did baffle and bind him, he disarmed and rifled him, he triumphed over him, and exposed him to shame; he cast him out, and dissolved all his works. At the appearance of Jesus his Doctrine, and the sound of his Name, his Altars were deserted, his Temples fell down, his Oracles were struck dumb, his Arts were supplanted, all his Worship and Kingdom were quite subverted. The sottish adoration of Creatures (by the suggestion also of Satan, and by Man's vain fancy advanced to a participation of divine honour) was also presently banished, and thrown away; the only true God (the Maker and Lord of all things) being thenceforth acknowledged and adored as the only fountain of Good, and the sole object of Worship.

Καὶ ἐπεὶ οὕτως
ἔσται.
Heb. 9. 10.
Isa. 65. 17.
66. 22. 43. 18.

Again whereas in regard to all these performances, the state of things constituted by the Messias is described so different from the former state of mankind, that it is called the creation of a new world: *For behold (saith God in Esay concerning the Messias his times) I create new heavens, and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind* (whence the Jews commonly before our Lord's time were used to call the Messias his time *the world to come, the future age*; It is plain that Jesus may well be esteemed to have accomplished the intent of those expressions; he (as the *ἐπινοήτωρ τοῦ κόσμου*, the rectifier and rearer of the world, as Origen calleth him) having wrought so huge alterations in the minds, and hearts, and lives of men, in their principles and opinions, in their dispositions, and in their practices; having so changed the face of affairs, and reformed the course of things in the world; bringing men out of lamentable darkness and error into clear light and knowledge, rescuing them from superstition, impiety and wickedness, and engaging them into ways of true religion, holiness and righteousness; so many persons being apparently renewed in the spirit of their minds; being made new creatures, created according to God in righteousness, and true holiness; so that (as the Apostle speaks) *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*; so that what the contumacious Jews, in anger and ill-will did call Jesus his instruments, had a true sense; they were οἱ τὴν οὐρανὸν ἀνατρεφόντες, they who had turned the world upside down; they did so indeed, but so as to settle it in a better posture.

Ὁμοιωθεὶς
τῷ κόσμῳ.
Heb. 2. 5.
Ὁ μέλλων
αἰὼν.
Heb. 6. 5.
Orig. in
Cell. 3.

Eph. 4. 23, 24.
2 Cor. 5. 17.

Acts 17. 6.

Οἱ δὲ κατὰ
ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ
νισμῷ καὶ
ἐρεσιν, &c.
Orig. in Cell.
lib. 1. p. 50.
Vid. Chryl.
in 1 Cor. 1.

Concerning which good effects of Christian Religion the ancient Christians had good reason to glory, and to say with Origen; *The adversaries of Christianity do not discern, how many mens diseases of soul, and how many floods of vices have been restrained; and how many mens savage manners have been tamed by reason of the Christian doctrine; wherefore being satisfied with the publick beneficialness thereof, which by a new method doth free men from many mischiefs, they ought willingly to render*

render thanks thereto, and to yield testimony, if not to the truth of it, yet to its profitableness to mankind.

There remain behind several important considerations appertaining to this purpose, concerning the performances of the *Messias*, and events about him; His being to suffer grievous things from men, and for men; his performing miraculous works; the yielding various attestations from heaven to his person and doctrine; from the congruity of which particulars to what *Jesus* did endure, and act; and to what God hath done in regard to him, the truth of our Conclusion, That *Jesus is the Christ*, will be manifest: but time now forbiddeth the prosecution of those matters; and I must therefore reserve it to an other occasion.

Now, To him that is able to keep us from * falling, and to present us blameless * Offending: before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the onely wise God our Saviour Jude 24, 25: be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now, and for ever.

Unto the King * eternal, immortal, invisible, the onely wise God, be honour and * Of ages. glory for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim. 1. 17

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Rev. 5. 13:

Salvation be unto our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Apoc. 7. 10.

Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. Apoc. 7. 12.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Apoc. 5. 12:

Unto him, that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Apoc. 1. 5:

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XIX.

That Jesus is the True Messias.

A C T S IX. 22.

----- Proving that Jesus is the Christ.



WHAT is the true notion of the name or Title *Christ*, we (in discoursing formerly upon this Text) did explain. That one Person, to whom that notion signally doth agree, was by God's especial determination to come into the world, we did also in the next place, from propheticall instruction (back'd with the common tradition, and current opinion of God's people) declare. We farther in the sequel did propound to shew, that *Jesus* (whom we acknowledge) was that very Person; the *Messias* predicted by the Prophets, and expected by the *Jews*. This we have already (in the foregoing discourses, proved from several circumstances of his birth and coming among men; from his personal qualification, and from divers illustrious performances managed by him, in correspondency to what the Prophets foretold concerning the *Messias*. The same we now proceed to confirm from other very considerable particulars foretold by them, and suting to him; and first from those things, which the *Messias* was to undergo, and suffer.

Acts 3. 17;
Luke 18. 31.

Did a

That

That the *Messias* was to come in an humble and homely manner (without appearances of worldly splendour or grandeur) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness; that he was to be disregarded and despised by men; that he was to cause offences, and to find oppositions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be scorned and hated, to be disgracefully and hardly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea that at last he was to be persecuted, condemned and executed as a malefactor, is a truth which the *Jews* (although they firmly believed, and earnestly expected the coming of a *Messias*) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits, yea inconsistent with the nature and drift of their Religion, as they understood it. For their Religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity and prosperity as things highly valuable; did propound them as very proper (if not as the sole) rewards of piety and obedience; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard; they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell: They particularly did conceit, that to be rich was a necessary qualification to a Prophet (no less necessary, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good life) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem*; the Spirit of God rests not upon a poor man (that is, no special communications of grace, wisdom, goodness, are ever by God afforded to persons of a low or afflicted condition) was a Rule they had framed, and which passed among them. That *He* therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore must be so highly favoured by God, should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd, could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had also (in congruity to those prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that Nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the *Messias* was to come in a great visible state and power; to do acts of great prowess and renown, to bring the Nations of the world into subjection under him, and so to reign among them in glorious majesty and prosperity. When *Jesus* therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications and performances to the prophetic characters of the *Messias*) did appear, such as he did, with pretences (or intimations rather) that he was the *Messias*, their stomach rose at it, they were hugely offended at him, they deemed him not only a mad-man (one possessed or distracted) and an impostour, but a blasphemer; for to be no less than blasphemy they took it, for so pitiful a wretch to arrogate unto himself so high a dignity, so near a relation to God, as the being the *Messias* did import. We see even the Disciples of our Lord so deeply tainted with this National prejudice, that (even after they had acknowledged him to be the *Christ*) they could not with patience hear him foretelling what should befall him; (*S. Peter*, upon that occasion, even just after he had confessed him to be the *Christ*, did, as the Text says, take him and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord*) Yea presently after that he most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of Kingdoms, and being Grandees in them; yea, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demand of him, whether he would at that time restore the Kingdom unto Israel (meaning such an external visible Kingdom.)

This hence of all things notifying the *Messias* seems to be the only particular, which in general the *Jews* did not, or would not see and acknowledge: and this caused them to oversee all the rest, how clearly soever shining in, and about the Person of *Jesus*. This cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being affected with the wonderfulness of his works; from minding or crediting all the testimonies ministered from heaven unto him. This (as *S. Paul* tells us) was the great scandal which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars, alledge the general consent of God's people, in expounding the Prophets according to our sense; this being one of those Points, in respect

Nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset. Tert. in Marc. 3. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 23.

Vid. Tert. ibid.

to which the Prophets did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that they should *look and not see, hear and not understand*; yielding here in special occasion to that complaint; *Who hath believed our report?*

Isa. 6. 9.
Ezek. 12. 2.
Matt. 13. 13.
Acts 28. 26.
Isa. 53. 1.

Yet notwithstanding their (affected) blindness, there is no particular concerning the *Messias*, in the ancient Scripture, either more frequently (in way of mystical insinuation, or adumbration) glanced at; or more clearly (in direct and plain language) expressed; or which also by reasonable deductions thence may be infer'd more strongly than this. S. Peter affirms that *God had foreshew'd it by the mouth of all his Prophets* (not only of some, but of *all his Prophets*;) The same our Lord himself did signify before his departure to his Disciples out of *Moses*, the *Prophets* and *Psalms*, shewing them this particular, and opening their minds to understand the Scriptures concerning it; concluding his discourse to them thus, *in the Hebrews, in the Latin and in the Greek, Thus it was written, and thus ought Christ* (according to the prophetic prefigurations and predictions) *to suffer*.

Acts 3. 18.
Luk 24. 44.

For the explaining and confirming of which truth, let us presume here to make a preparatory discourse or digression (not unseasonable perhaps, or improper to our purpose) concerning the nature of divine prefigurations, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient Scripture in the *New Testament* (the which, together with others connected to them, or bearing analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his Apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.) We may then consider, that the All-wise God, (who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are present) having before eternal times (as St. Paul speaketh) determined in due time to send the *Messias* for accomplishing the greatest design, that ever was to be managed in this world (which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the greatest benefit to the principal of his creatures here) did by his incomprehensible providence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency, and advantageous reference thereto; so that when it came upon the stage, it might appear, that the main of the plot consisted therein, and that whatever before was acted, had a principal respect thereto. As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations toward it, by steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order to it (somewhat to *Adam* himself, more to *Abraham* and the *Patriarchs*, somewhat farther to *Moses*, much more yet to divers of the Prophets among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered several instructions conformable to it, and nearly conducing to the promoting thereof.) So he did also take especial care by many apposite *resemblances*, handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it; that so at length it might shew it self with more solemnity, and less surprise. The most eminent persons therefore, whom he raised up and employ'd in his affairs tending to that end, as they did resemble the *Messias* in being instruments of his particular grace and providence (being indeed inferiour Christs and Mediatours, and partial Saviours of his people, as they are sometimes called) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they did, in the principal accidents befalling them to represent him; as also the rites and services instituted by them were adapted to the same purpose; they and all things about them being * fitted by God's especial wise care so as to be congruous emblems and shadows prefiguring the Christ, and what appertained to him; his circumstances and accidents, his performances, his institutions. Thus was *Adam* (as S. Paul calls him) a type of *Christ*; *Abel*, *Melchizedek*, *Isaac*, *Moses*, *Joshua*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Zorobabel* are also intimated to have been such; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suited to answer somewhat that was remarkable concerning him; We may say of them all, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says of the *Jewish Priests*. *They served to the subindication and shadowing of heavenly things* (in the Hebrews, in the Latin and in the Greek.) In *David* particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof often (as we before noted) in the Prophets, (*Jeremy*, *Ezekiel*, *Hosea*) the *Messias* is called by his Name. It indeed well suited the dignity of this great Person, and the importance of his business, that he should have such notable ushers, heralds and harbingers going before his face; furnished with conspicuous badges and ensigns denoting their relation to him; It was proper,

Eph. 1. 11.
2 Tim. 1. 9.
Tit. 1. 2.
1 Cor. 2. 7.
Eph. 1. 3. 9.
Rom. 16. 25.
Col. 1. 26.

Nonne Jesus
pharaon Eu-
lebius calls
them.
Eccl. H. 1. 3.
Heb. 8. 6.
Gal. 3. 19.
Neh. 9. 27.
Acts 7. 35.
Exod. 25. 40.
Rom. 5. 14.

Heb. 8. 5.
Heb. 8. 5. 10.
1. 9. 23.

Gal. 4. 24.
Col. 2. 17.

per, that God should appear always to have had an express care, and especial regard toward him. It consequently serves for our edification; for that we duly comparing things, and discerning this admirable correspondence, may be somewhat instructed thereby, and somewhat confirmed in our faith, may be excited to

Ὅτι δὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἰσχυροῖς καὶ ἀληθεῖς
Χριστῷ τῷ κατὰ πάντα βασιλεὶς ὁ θεὸς
λόγῳ βασιλεὺς καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἡγεμονία τῶν
πάντων δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο. (Euleb. 10. &c.)
1 Cor. 10, 11, 6.

the admiration of God's wisdom and goodness (so provident for our good) may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the *Messias*, and to esteem his design. *All these things* (saith S. Paul, having compared divers things concerning *Moses* to things concerning *Christ*) *happened as types, and*

they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come. It is also (for illustration, and also for proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of *Christ*, many

Vid. de Script.
Ohs. & Propb.
Chryl. Tom. 6.
pag. 649. &c.
& 658, &c.

things are spoken of them as such; many things are ascribed to them; which only or chiefly were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed not to divine wisdom convenient or seasonable in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men; (Why God should chuse to express things of this nature in such a manner,

Apo. 2. 7. &c.
13. 18. 17. 9.
Matt. 13. 9.
24. 15.
Dan. 9. 1.
John 5. 39.
Luke 24. 45.
1 Cor. 12. 10.
14. 26.
Eph. 1. 9, 10.

we need not to determine; it may be perhaps for reasons best known to himself, and above our ken or cognizance; yet probable reasons may be assigned for it; yea some more than probable being hinted in Scripture; it may be for a decent and harmonious distinction of times, of dispensations, of persons; it may be from the depth of things to conciliate a reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of doing so; it may be to exercise and improve mens understanding, to enflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them humble; it may be to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word; it may be for occasion of freely convey-

Matt. 13. 13.
11. 25. 7. 6.

ing special gifts of interpretation; it may be to conceal some things from some persons unfit, or unworthy to know them, especially from persons haughty and self-conceited; it may be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great event (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*) it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly discovered to all persons; it is evident that some things are purposely couched in parabolical and mysterious expression; it is particularly the manner of prophetic instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season and every capacity; but to return from out of this

Acts 3. 17.
1 Cor. 2. 8.

parenthesis to our case.) That under the names of Persons representing *Christ* (or of things we may add adumbrating his things) many things are intimated concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after a very improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wildness of interpretation; such as doth not well sute to the nature of true histories, and serious promises. Thus (for instance) are many things foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous estate of the *Jewish Church*, which history and experience testify never (according to strictness of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree near the height of what the words import) to have happened. Thus also (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* well argueth) effects are attributed to the *Jewish* rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of the thing cannot belong to them, otherwise than as shadows

Ha. 25. 8.

and substitutes of higher things. Thus also, what is, with solemn oath, promised to *Solomon* (concerning the vast extent, and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace and prosperity; together with his mighty acts and victorious achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been performed. Thus also *David* (as S. Peter observes and argues in the second of the *Acts*) speaketh many things of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him. Such things therefore are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future most perfect state of

Heb. 10. 4.

things under the *Messias*; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) and his dispensation, which was to contain the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified. This is that which Saint *Austin* signifies when he says,

Psal. 45. 72.
83, &c.

Which

Acts 2. 29.

Rom. 10. 4.

2 Cor. 3. 13.

Luke 22. 37.

Which Christ (saith he, and what concerns him) — all the promises of that nation, all their prophecies, priesthood, sacrifices, their temple, and altogether all their sacraments did reveal, or express.

Quem Christum — omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetias, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, & cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt. Aug. ad Voluf. Ep. 3.

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the New Testament, but they agree (as to their general importance) to the sense of the ancient Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of Scriptures. They supposed a *Midrash* or mystical sense of Scripture, which they very studiously (even to excess commonly) did search after. It was (as *Lud. Capellus* affirms) a confident and constant opinion of their Doctors, that all things in *Moses* his Law were typical, and capable of mystical exposition. And *Philo's* Writings (composed in, or immediately after our Saviour's times) are a plain confirmation of what he saith; we have also several instances and intimations thereof in the New Testament. Neither probably would the Apostles in their discourses and disputations with the Jews have used this way of interpreting and citing passages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Now these things being (cursorily) premised, we return into our way, and say, that the *Messias* his being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient Scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing it self should be, there is a peculiar reason, why it should be so represented, thus expressed by *Tertullian*:

The Sacrament indeed (saith he) of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the (ancient) predication; forasmuch as that the more incredible it was, if it should have been preached nakedly, the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be shamed, that the difficulty of understanding it might cause the seeking of God's grace.

Utique Sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in predicationibus oportuerat; quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum; quantoque magnificentum, tanto magis adumbrandum, ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quaereret. Tertull. in Iudaeos. cap. 10.

Supposing also it should be, the passages about *Abel*, *Isaac*, *Josias*, *Jeremy*, (and the like) may congruously be applied thereto; The elevation of the Brazen Serpent, and the killing of the Paschal Lamb may appositely represent it; the Jewish Priests, with all their Sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in and accommodated thereto: These things are not indeed by themselves alone apt peremptorily to evince, that it should be; yet do they handsomely suite it, and adorn the supposition thereof, according to the notion we touched about the typical relation between the matters of the Old World before the *Messias*, and those of the New one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the *Messias* his sufferings were implied in the afflictions of his representative King *David*, such as he in several *Psalms* (the 35, 69, 109, 118, and especially in the 22. *Psalms*) describeth them; wherein divers passages (expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition) occur, which by the history of his life, do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his Person; which therefore there is a necessity, or (at least) much reason that they should be applied to the *Messias*, whom *David* did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing then the passages we have there to what befel *Jesus*, we shall find an admirable harmony, there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in emphatical and express terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men and despised of the people.*) The causeless hatred and enmity of the populace and of the Great ones toward him: (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: They compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause.*) The ingrateful requital made to him for all the good done by him, and intended by him (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.*) Their rejecting him (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner.*) Their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him (*Without cause have they hid for me their net, in a pit which without cause they have digged for my soul: and False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not: and, The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me, they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.*) Their bitter insulting over him in his affliction (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together, yea the*

Psal. 22. 6.

Psal. 69. 4.

35. 7. 109. 3.

Psal. 35. 12.

109. 5.

Psal. 118. 22.

Psal. 35. 7, 11.

109. 2.

Psal. 35. 15.

69. 26.

the

the abjects gathered themselves together against me — They persecute him, whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those, whom thou hast wounded : *ἡ δὲ ἡ ἀλγὴ καὶ ἡ στενοχωρία καὶ ὁ πόθος καὶ ὁ πόνος*, and to the smart of my wounds, they added, (say the LXX.) Their scornful reviling, flouting, and mocking him (All they that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot the lip ; they shake the head (saying) He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. I became a reproach unto them, when they looked upon me, they shook their heads. They opened their mouth wide against me, and said Aha, Aha ; our eye hath seen it. *Ἐπείγουσιν μοι, ὀνειδίζουσίν μοι, ὀνειδίζουσίν μοι ἰσχυρὰ ἰσχυρὰ καὶ τὰς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτῶν.* They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me.) The cruel manner of their dealing with him (Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me ; they pierced my hands and my feet ; I may tell all my bones ; they look and stare upon me.) Their dealing with him, when in his distress he called for some refreshment (They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.) Their disposal of his garments upon his suffering (They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.) His being deserted of his friends, and destitute of all consolation (I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mothers children. — I am full of heaviness, and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.) The sense of God's withholding his favour and help (My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ; why art thou so far from helping me ? —) His charitable disposition and behaviour toward his persecutors (But as for me when they were sick, (or as the LXX. when they did trouble me, *Ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ μενοχλῶν μοι*) my cloathing was sackcloth, I humbled my self with fasting ; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom ; I behaved my self as though it had been my friend or brother ; I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother.) Which passages, and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the Gospels, I need not to shew ; we do all, I suppose, well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able our selves to make the application.

But there are not only such oblique intimations, throwed under the coverture of other Persons and Names, but direct and immediate predictions concerning the Messiah his being to suffer most clearly expressed. That whole famous Chapter in *Esay* (the 53d Chapter) doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented. His appearing meanness (He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.) The disgrace, contempt, repulses and rejection he underwent (He is despised, and rejected of men — we hid our faces from him ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.) His afflicted state (He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.) The bitter and painful manner of his affliction (He was stricken ; bore stripes, was wounded, was bruised.) His being accused, adjudged and condemned as a malefactor (He was taken from prison, and from judgment — he was numbred among the transgressors.) His consequent death (He poured out his soul unto death ; He was cut out of the land of the living.) The design and end of his sufferings ; they were appointed and inflicted by Divine providence for our sake, and in our stead ; for the expiation of our sins, and our salvation (It pleased the Lord to bruise him ; he hath put him to grief — when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin : — He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ; — the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed ; — Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows. — For the transgression of my people he was smitten ; — The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.) His sustaining all this with a willing patience and meekness (He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth ; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.) His charitable praying for his persecutors ; so that may be understood (He made intercession for the transgressors.) The consequence and success of his sufferings (He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand : He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied ; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many ; — and, I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.) Which passages as they most exactly

exactly suite to *Jesus*, and might in a manner constitute an historical narration of what he did endure, together with the opinions taught in the *Gospel* concerning the intent and effect of his sufferings; so that they did (according to the intention of the Divine Spirit) relate to the *Messias*, may from several considerations be apparent: The context and coherence of all this passage with the precedent and subsequent passages, which plainly respect the *Messias*, and his times: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings?* — and, *Behold my servant shall deal prudently*, &c. are passages immediately going before, of which this 53d Chapter is but a continuation: and immediately after it followeth — *Sing O barren, thou that didst not bear*, &c. being a very elegant, and perspicuous description of the Church augmented by accession of the *Gentiles*, which was to be brought to pass by the *Messias*. The general scope of this whole prophecy argues the same; And the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other Person imaginable beside the *Messias* doth farther evince it; so high are the things which are attributed to the Suffering Person; as that he should bear the sins of all God's people and heal them; that he should by his knowledge justify many; that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand; that God would divide him a portion with the great; and that he should divide the spoil with the strong — The magnificency and importance of which things do well agree to the *Messias*, but not to any other person: whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a *Messias*, they had as much reason to apply this place to him as any other, and to acknowledge he was to be a great sufferer; and indeed divers of the ancient *Targumists* and most learned *Rabbins* did expound this place of the one *Messias* that was to come, as the *Pugio Fidei*, and other learned Writers do by several testimonies shew. This place also discovers the vanity of that figment devised by some later Jews, who to evade and oppose *Jesus* affirmed there was to be a double *Messias* (one who should be much afflicted, the other who should greatly prosper) since we may observe that here both great afflictions, and glorious performances are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are also by parts clearly predicted in other places of this Prophet, and in other Scriptures: By *Esay* again in the Chapter immediately foregoing: *Behold (saith he) my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and ex-* *tolled, and be very high*, (there is God's servant (he that is in way of excellency such, that is, in this Prophet's style, the *Messias*) in his real glorious capacity; it follows, concerning his external appearance) *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men*, — And again, (in the forty-ninth Chapter) *Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his Holy one: To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of Rulers, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship*: What can be more express and clear, than that the *Messias*, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment, and adoration of himself, was to be despised by men; to be detested by the Jews, and to appear in a servile and base condition? The same Prophet again brings him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting*. His offending the Jews and aggravating their sins is also expressed by this same Prophet — *And (saith he) He shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*. The opposition also he should receive is signified in the second Psalm — *The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed*. The Prophet *Zechary* doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings: His low condition in those words: *Behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly (Pau-* *per) and riding upon an ass*: His manner of death in those: *Awake O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow (saith the Lord of hosts) smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered*: And again, *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c.* The Prophet *Daniel* also in that place, from which probably the name *Messias* was taken, and which most expressly mentions him, saith, that after three score and two weeks the *Messias* shall be cut off, but not for himself — Now from

these passages of Scripture we may well say with our Lord ; *ὅτι ἡμεῖς γινώσκουμεν, ὅτι*
 Luke 24: 26. *ὅτι ἡμεῖς γινώσκουμεν ὅτι Χριστὸς* That thus it was written, and thus, according to the Pro-
 phets foretelling, it was to happen, that the Messiah should suffer ; suffer in a life
 of penury and contempt, in a death of shame and sorrow.

That it was to be thus might also be inferred by reasons grounded on the quali-
 ties of the Messiah his Person, and the nature of his performances, such as they
 are described in the Scripture. He was to be really and to appear plainly a per-
 son of most admirable virtue and good worth ; but never was or can there be a-
 ny such (as even Pagan Philosophers, Plato, Seneca, and others have observed)
 without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern
 to men of all sorts (especially to the greatest part, that is to the poor) of all
 righteousness ; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty (Humi-
 lity, Patience, Meekness, Charity, Self-denial, entire resignation to God's will)
 this he should not have opportunity or advantage of doing, if his condition had
 been high, wealthy, splendid and prosperous. He was to exercise pity and sym-
 pathy towards all mankind ; the which to do it was requisite he should feel the in-
 conveniencies and miseries incident to mankind. He was to advance the repute
 of spiritual and eternal good ; and to depress the value of those corporeal and
 temporal things, which men vainly admire ; the most ready and compendious
 way of doing this was by an exemplary neglecting and refusing worldly enjoy-
 ments (the honours, profits and pleasures here.) He was by gentle and peaceable
 means to erect a spiritual Kingdom, to subdue the hearts and consciences of men
 to the love and obedience of God, to raise in men the hopes of future rewards
 and blessings in heaven ; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glo-
 ry had been rather prejudicial, than conducive. He was to manage his great de-
 signs by means supernatural and divine, the which would be more conspicuous
 by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was to merit most highly
 from God for himself, and for men ; this he could not do so well, as in endu-
 ring for God's sake and ours the hardest things. He was to save men, and con-
 sequently to appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, by the expiation of our
 sins ; this required that he should suffer what we had deserved. But reasons of
 this kind I partly before touched, and shall hereafter have occasion to prosecute
 more fully in treating upon the article of our Saviour's passion.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in
 this kind declared concerning the Messiah, we need not by relating minutely the
 known history of his life and death make out farther ; since the whole matter is
 palpably notorious, and no adversary will deny it. I conclude this Point with St.
 Peter's words (for the illustration and proof of which this discourse hath been
 made) *But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Pro-*
 Acts 3: 18. *phets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XX.

That *Jesus* is the True *Messias*.

JOHN V. 37.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me.

JESUS, our Lord, here, and in the Context doth affirm, that Almighty God, his Father, had granted unto him several kinds of extraordinary attestation, sufficient to convince all well-disposed persons, unto whom they shall be discovered, that he truly was that *Messias*, whom God before all beginning of time had designed, and frequently by his Prophets had promised to send for the reformation of the world, and salvation of mankind: to represent those several ways of divine attestation with some reflections on them, serving both to the confirmation of our faith, and improving our affection, and our reverence thereto, is my chief design at this time.

But *first* in preparation to what we shall say concerning those particulars, and for declaration of the divine wisdom in this manner of proceeding, I shall assign some reasons, why it was requisite, that such attestations should be afforded to our Lord.

1. The nature of the *Messias* his Office required such attestations; for since he was designed to the most eminent employment that ever was, or could be committed to any person; since he was to reveal things no less great and important, than new and strange; since he was to assume a most high authority unto himself; since he was to speak, and act all in the name of God; since also all men under great penalties were obliged to yield credit and obedience to him, there was great reason that God should appear to authorize him; that he should be able to produce God's hand and seal to his commission; for that otherwise he might have been suspected of imposture; his doctrine might have been rejected, his authority disclaimed, and his design frustrated, without great blame, or however without mens being convincible of blame: for well might the people suspect that person, who, professing to come in such a capacity an extraordinary *Agent* from heaven, brought no *Credentials* thence, (no evidence of God's especial favour and assistance;) well might they reject that new doctrine, which God vouchsafed not by any signal testimony to countenance; well might they disclaim that authority, which offering to introduce so great innovations (to repeal old laws, to cancel settled obligations, to abolish ancient customs; to enact new laws and rules, exacting obedience to them from all men) should not be able to exhibit its warrant, and shew its derivation from heaven: well might such peremptory assertions, and so confident pretences, without confirmations answerable in weight, beget even in wise men distrust and aversion. The reasonableness and excellency of his doctrine, the innocence and sanctity of his life, the wisdom and persuasiveness of his discourse would not, if nothing more divine should attend them, be thoroughly able to procure faith and submission; they would at best have made his precepts to pass for the devices of a wise man, or the dictates of a good Philosopher. They were therefore no unreasonable desires or demands (if they had proceeded from a good meaning, and had been joined with a docile and tractable

Deut 18: 19.
Acts 3. 23.

John 6. 27.

Ἀνάπυξον
τῇ διανοίᾳ,
καὶ ἐνόησον
ἡλίαν ὅτι
τὴν οὐρανὸν ἡλίου
καὶ οὐρανόθεν ἔ-
πασαν, &c.
Chryf. Tom. 6.
Or. 61. p. 634.

Acts 10. 38.
John 3. 2.

3. We may farther consider, that *the Christ* was designed to present himself first to the *Jews* (in the first place imparting the declarations of Gods will, and gracious intentions to them, his ancient friends and favourites) that is to a people wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and incapable of conviction by any other: 1 Cor. 1. 22. they did not, as did the *Greeks*, seek wisdom, but required a sign, as *S. Paul* observed of them; they were not so apt to enquire after the intrinick reasons of things, as to expect testimonies from heaven; nothing else was able to persuade them; so John 4. 48. our Lord expressly saith; *Jesus said unto them, if you do not see signs and prodigies, you will no-wise believe*: In consequence of which disposition in them, we see by passages in the *New Testament*, that they expected and believed the *Messias* should come with such attestations, and performances; so their importunate demanding of signs upon all occasions from our Lord doth signify, and so those words in John 7. 31. *S. John* do imply: *And many of the people believed on him, and said; when Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these, which this man doeth?* where we may observe both their expectation of miraculous works from the *Messias*, and the efficacy

tacy which such works had upon them. The condition also of the *Gentiles* unto whom his design in the next place did extend, seemed to require the same proceedings: for all other methods of instruction and perswasion had before often been applied to them by Philosophers, and by Politicians for instilling their notions, and recommending their laws; they had been so inured to subtile argumentations, and plausible discourses, that the bare use of them was not likely to have any extraordinary effect upon them: If the *Messias* therefore should bring no other confirmation with him unto them, he would seem to deserve no higher regard or credit, than other Doctors or Law-givers, which had appeared among them; and as easily would he be declined, and put off by them: whence reasonably it may be supposed, that for accommodation to the *genius*, and the capacities of those, upon whose hearts he was to make impresson, the *Messias* should come furnished with such special testimonials, and powers from God. Especially considering that,

4. It was agreeable to God's usual method of proceeding in cases resembling this, although much unequal thereto in weight, and consequence. There was never any more than ordinary discovery made to men by God, never any very considerable business managed by divine providence; never hardly any eminent Person appeared with a pretence of coming from God for the prosecution of such purposes, without God's visible interposal and abetment: This hath always been the authentick *Seal*, whereby he hath wonted to authorize the messengers sent from himself for transacting affairs of an unusual, and very weighty nature; whereby his true Ambassadors have been distinguishable from ordinary persons, or from deceitful pretenders, who have offered to impose their own devices upon men: to a person bringing with him this sort of assurance (except when his tale is evidently false and vain, or his design notoriously wicked and mischievous) God hath always required, that a ready credence and obedience should be yielded; taking it for a high affront to himself (no less, as *S. John* says, than giving him the lye) to disbelieve such a person, and for a heinous contumacy to disobey him: that it hath been God's ordinary method, the course of divine History shews. When God separated the *Patriarchs* for the preservation and propagation of his true Religion, he manifested an especial presence with them, frequently appearing to them, visibly assisting and blessing them in a more than ordinary manner, enduing them with a propheticall discretion, and foresight of things; when he would rescue the seed of those his friends from cruel oppression and hard slavery (designing also by them to maintain, and convey down the sincere way of piety) he imparted also to *Moses* the special instrument of those purposes, a power of doing wonders, thereby procuring authority to his person, and credit to his pretences. *Moses* did well perceive, and judge, that had he come without such attestation he should not have been received or regarded: But Behold (said he) *they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; for they will say, the Lord hath not appeared unto thee: wherefore* God furnished him with such a power of doing such things as should assure the truth of his message; the effect whereof is thus expressed; — *Israel saw that great work, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses:* To the promulgation of the Law, and establishment of that particular Covenant with the *Israelites*, God did also exhibit significations of his presence in a most evident and affecting manner: *Loe* (said God to *Moses*, expressing that matter, and its design) *I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.* And in the whole conduct of that people toward *Canaan*, God for those ends vouchsafed by *Moses* to perform very great and prodigious things; which we may see reckoned up in the 78th and 105th *Psalms*, and in the 9th of *Nehemiah*: So also when God employed *Elias* to sustain the remainders of decayed piety in *Israel* against the countenance of power given to wickedness, and against the stream of popular use, he endued him with a liberal measure of his Spirit, and a power of doing great miracles: the like may be observed of all the *Prophets*, *Judges* and *Princes*, who upon special occasions were raised to perform considerable services for the glory of God, and the good of his People. This therefore being God's constant practice, it cannot but be well supposed, that in this case he would not withhold his attestation, but would afford it in a most plentiful measure to that person who was in dignity so far to excell all other his Envoys and Agents; whose undertaking should in importance so vastly transcend all others, that ever were set on

Orig. cont.
Celt. 8.
(p. 408.)

John 6: 27.

Joh. 5: 10.
John 3: 33.

Gen. 21: 22.

Exod. 4: 1.

Exod. 4: 5, 31.
Deut. 4: 34.

5: 15, 7: 19.
4: 35, 39.

Exod. 19: 9.
Neh. 9: 13.

So Psal. 78: 14.
105: 39.
Neh. 9: 15.

on foot in the world; to him, who was to free not one small people only, but all mankind, not from a temporal slavery in *Egypt*, but from eternal misery in Hell; to promulge not a pedagogy of ritual observances, but a law of spiritual righteousness; to establish not a temporal Covenant for a little spot of earth, but an everlasting Testament for all the World, importing endless beatitude in heaven. God therefore surely would not balk his road upon such an occasion, nor refuse his especial testimonials to so great a Personage, and to so good a Design.

5. If we consider the general reasons assignable, why God hath been wont to proceed in this manner, or why he should use it upon any occasion, they are with strongest force applicable to this case. The most general reasons why God doth ever interpose extraordinarily, or produce works supernatural, are to assert palpably his own Divinity and Providence; strongly to encourage devotion and piety in men: for he by suspending, or thwarting the course of nature plainly declareth himself the maker, and master thereof; that he freely made the world, and freely doth uphold it; that he hath not tied his own hands, nor confined his power within limits; but is superiour to, and free from all laws, excepting those of indefectible holiness and goodness; and consequently that all things do not proceed in a track of dead fatality. He thereby also assureth us, that he hath an especial regard unto, and a care over men, and wisely ordereth humane affairs by his providence, frequently (as wisdom directeth, and occasion requireth) interposing his hand for the succour, encouragement and reward of good men; that therefore it is not vain to hope and trust in him, that prayers and devotions are available to procure good from him; that repentance and obedience are no less profitable for us, than acceptable to him; that also he freely and justly dispenseth recompences suitable to mens actions voluntarily performed; that in fine, there is a foundation of Religion, and a ground of justice between God and man: these things are most evidently, and effectually demonstrated by extraordinary attestations; and when therefore could they more seasonably be used, than when God by the *Messias* intended to call all the world to the acknowledgment and obedience of himself, to the practice of all piety and goodness, with assurances of fit reward, in regard to such practice? If farther to excite mens attention and regard, to breed awe and reverence in mens minds, to confound the impudence, and to bend or break the obstinacy of men are main ends, and proper effects of such testimonies; whether we consider the *Messias* his person, the nature of his undertaking, or the persons with whom he was to deal, 'tis plain (as we have shewed) that his business would best deserve, and most need them; no dispensation could better deserve them for worth and consequence; none could more need them for greatness and difficulty.

Such reasons may be assigned for the necessity and usefulness of divine attestations in this case: but in opposition to these discourses, and in derogation to this way of confirming any truth or authority, it may be said, that no such attestations can well serve to such purposes; for that the like have been, and may be applied to the persuasion of error and impiety by *false Prophets*, and *Antichrists*; by

Deut. 13. 30.

Matt. 24. 24.

2 Thes. 2. 2.

Magicians, and *Wizards*; who not only have cunningly counterfeited, but really executed very prodigious and wondrous things, in a manner unaccountable to humane Philosophy. Since also there are wicked spirits, in subtilty and power far exceeding us, who are able easily to divert the natural course of things; and the

Πῶς ἐν ἡμέραις τοῦ Χριστοῦ
ἡ μὲν δόξα, καὶ ἡ δύναμις, καὶ ἡ
δόξα, καὶ ἡ δύναμις, καὶ ἡ
Cell. apud Orig. lib. 2. (p. 89.)

Siquidem edicens multos venturos, &
signa facituros, temerariam planè signorum,
& virtutum fidem ostendit, ut apud Pseudo-
Christianos facillimum. Tert. in Marc.
3. 2.

Aug. de Civ.

Dei 10. 16.

limits of whose power in working so, it is hard for us to discern or define; how can we be assured, that what is done in this kind, doth not proceed from them, but from a virtue divine? how can it be a certain and convincing argument of truth? may we not here object that of *Tertullian*, saying, that *Our Lord pronouncing that many Impostors should come, and do miracles, shewed thereby the faith grounded on miracles to be temerarious*.

To this suggestion we may in general return, that seeing the doing such things is the chief and most effectual way, whereby God beyond the resistance of doubt or dispute can in some cases assure us concerning his mind and will, (whereby he can bestow honour and credit to any instrument employed by him, to any revelation proceeding from him) it cannot but (notwithstanding that cross instance) reasonably be supposed, that God however doth reserve the power thereof in some eminent

eminent and discernable manner peculiar to himself, for the promoting his own service. That also at least God, being the author and establisher of nature, and the continual sustainer of it by his free providence, it is not likely, that he will suffer the laws and course thereof to be much violated, except upon occasions very considerable, and for very good purposes; no inferior cause being able to determine his voluntary influence, or providential concurrence to the accomplishment of designs contrary to his will and purpose. That also the natural goodness and justice of God, the constant care and providence he exerciseth over this world, the particular relations he beareth toward mankind (as the Maker and Father, the Lord and Governour thereof) the honour and interest of truth, of religion, of virtue (whose Protector and Patron he is, and declareth himself) the necessary regard he also, in connexion with the rest, doth bear to his own honour and glory do all conspire to persuade, that God will never endure such things to be performed in any high manner, so that good and well-meaning people shall be very liable to be thereby extremely seduced into error; or that himself shall be intolerably mocked by the enemies of his glory, and our good. This may serve to render it probable, that the objection is capable of a solution.

But to answer more distinctly and particularly; we do grant, that God sometimes for special reasons (for wise probation of some persons, and just punishment of others; for to approve some mens sincerity and constancy, to detect other mens naughtiness and vanity) may permit such things (in some manner, in some degree such) to be effected by the influence of wicked spirits, or the fraud of wicked men; yet then it will never be very hard for moderately wise, and well disposed persons to distinguish such feats from those acts, which issue from the positive and direct efficacy of God, for authorizing his messengers, and confirming his truth: We may usually discern them to come from bad causes by their nature; we may certainly detect them by their design and influence.

There are some things so great, that it is not reasonable to conceive, that any such inferior power is able to do them; or if they were able, that God should permit their power actually to be exerted, and to succeed in doing them: such is the making any general or grand alteration in the course of nature; which being God's great work and establishment, the which he doth (as the Prophets speak) govern by a standing law, and preserve according to a perpetual decree, which cannot pass; yea according to a *Covenant*, which his faithfulness is in a manner engaged to observe; it is not probable that he will suffer any creature to disturb or disorder: this experience well confirmeth, for had bad spirits a power of crossing nature so, such is their malice and proneness to do mischief, that the world would soon have been turned by them into confusion and ruin; that all things therein go in so kindly and steady a course, is an argument of their small power and influence upon things; that God holdeth the reins fast in his own hands, reserving to himself only as Lord paramount of Nature a power to dispense with any of its main laws; that it is *he alone, who* (as the Psalmist saith) *doeth great wonders*. There are also some things, which although not of so great and general consequence, are yet of so difficult performance, that it is improbable any creature should effect them; such was the turning of dust into lice, which the Devils could not enable the Egyptian sorcerers to perform; to prepare or dispose so much dust for the reception of souls, and to furnish so many souls for the dust did it seem exceed their ability; whence they were forced to confess of that miracle done by Moses; *This is the finger of God*.

There are also things so good, and so beneficial to mankind, that evil spirits may be deemed unable to do them (God the fountain of good retaining them as instruments of his glory, and arguments of his goodness, to his own dispensation) which also we may presume they would not be willing, were they able, to perform, it being against their disposition, or their interest to do it; such are to dispossess Devils (that is to divide and weaken their own Kingdom) to discover moral truths of consequence (that is to drive men from themselves) and even to free men from grievous diseases (that is, to starve their own *ἐμπύρισμα*, and malignity) as is implied in that passage of the Gospel; where it is said, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil; can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* Extraordinary works then if they are very great, very hard, very good, do thence indicate

1 Cor. 11. 19.

2 Theff. 2. 9.

11.

Deut. 13. 1.

&c.

Matt. 24. 24.

Apoc. 13. 13.

Jer. 5. 22.

33. 25.

Psal. 148. 26.

Psal. 136. 4.

72. 18. 86. 10.

Deut. 3. 24.

Exod. 8. 19.

John 10. 31.

indicate their cause to be divine : wicked spirits deal only in petty, low and useless prestigiatory tricks, of small consequence, and no benefit.

But there are farther some things infallibly signifying a divine virtue, peculiar to God, and (either by their nature, or from the decree of God) incommunicable to any creature, otherwise than as acted by God, or immediately depending on him ; such are, the knowledge of future contingent events declared by predicting, or presignifying them, according to that of the Prophet ; *Shew* (said he, in way of challenge, and conviction to the objects of Heathen worship) *the things to come, that we may know ye are Gods* ; such is the discerning mens secret thoughts and intentions, the which God assumeth as proper to himself ; *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins* ; so that *καρδιοσκόπος* is a characteristical attribute, or title proper to him. Such is the restitution of men from a state of death to life ; a work not only in it self most difficult, in respect to the ordinary rule of nature, which it transgresseth, but impossible to any mere creature, without God's aid ; for that the souls of men when they die return into God's hand, and enter into a state determined by his high sentence ; whence no creature can fetch them down, or raise them up ; most impossible also because God by especial decree hath reserved the power of doing it appropriate to himself ; the power of life and death being his prerogative, who saith, *I am he, and there is no God * beside me ; I kill, and I make alive*, of whom again it is said, *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive ; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up* : He it is, that in his hand doth hold the keys of hell, and of death. The performing things also by mere word and will, without application of other force, or any preparation of the subject matter (being equivalent to the work of creation) is peculiar unto God, the author of all being, or to such as act by the immediate help of his infinite power.

We may add, that there also seem to be some things, which infernal spirits (who continue under restraint and command, within a great awe and dread of their Judge) dare not so much as pretend to, or counterfeit ; knowing that as presently they shall be checked in their attempt, so they shall be grievously chastised for their presumptions ; such may be the assuming to themselves the special names of God, the directly withstanding the extraordinary messengers of God, and the like.

So even considering the very nature of strange works may enable us to distinguish them ; but the end and design of such works, together with the influences and effects of them will farther ascertain us of their original : If they are done to abett any gross error, or to promote any mischievous purpose ; if they manifestly do seduce to Apostacy from God or goodness, if they naturally tend to the production of impiety, iniquity or impurity ; if they do necessarily produce any great disorder or disturbance in the world, assuredly hell is the source of them ; they derive from him, whose Kingdom and interest they advance ; by their fruits we may know the tree from which they grow. If also they discover ostentation and vanity in the actors, or serve only to gratify idle humour and curiosity in the spectators of them, tending otherwise to no good purpose ; it is easy to collect whence they spring ; that they come from the father both of mischiefs and vanities, who not only delights to abuse us with villanies, but to amuse us also with trifles, and fond superstitions.

Ὡς ὁ δὲ ἐν δυνάμει ἡ ἐξ Ἀιγύπτου ἐπορεύθη τὴν ἐν τῷ Μωσὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγειν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τίλον διέλεγε τὸ μὴ εἶναι Αἰγυπτίων ὄντα μαγιστεύσας.
Orig. in Cels. 2.

As (saith Origen) the power of those enchantments in Egypt was not (in it self) like to that admirable power by God's grace vouchsafed to Moses ; so the end did convince those Egyptian feats to be jugglings, those of Moses to be divine. The portentous things done by the energy of Satan are (as S. Paul call-

2 Theff. 2. 9. eth them) τρεῖς καὶ ἑξήκοντα, either false prodigies, or prodigies abetting falshood and vanity.

But the works of the most wise and good God, as they are commonly works of wonderful majesty and grandeur, incomparable and inimitable for difficulty ; so they always are holy, always useful ; they ever aim at good ends, and produce wholesome fruits ; hence we may discern them, and hence we are obliged to acknowledge them ; they afford us ground to say with the Psalmist ; *Unto thee, O Lord, we do give thanks, for that thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare.* Such works as they can only be effects of God's power, so they are arguments of his

his truth; for that he cannot lend his hand, for that he will not prostitute his assistance to the maintenance of any thing, which is not perfectly true and good; he will *not so tempt any man* into error; *If I by the finger of God cast out Devils,* James 1. 13. *then indeed is the Kingdom of God come unto you* (that is, If I perform works by the divine power, then assuredly is my doctrine true) was an irrefragable argument. Luke 11. 20.

We may also observe, that those wicked spirits are themselves apprehensive how easily their feats are distinguished from the works of God; for, hence it seems they chose to utter them clancularly, in obscure corners, in blind times, among barbarous and silly people; judging that persons of any wisdom or goodness will be soon able to detect them, and ready to explode them; a little light dazzles the powers of darkness, and scares away these spectres; a little goodness mates their force, enfeebleth and dishearteneth them.

We may also add, that the *Messias* his works by a peculiar character should be manifestly distinguishable from such as proceeded from infernal powers; for that it should be his business to impugn, defeat and overthrow the Devil's kingdom; all the falsehoods and superstitions, all the immoralities and impieties which it consisted in, or which supported it: to this end all his doctrine, practice and performances would conspiringly tend, that *Satan like lightning should be thrown down from heaven*; which most evidently would evince, that what he should do should only come from heaven. Luke 10. 18.

Having thus shewed reasons why, and signified to what purposes the *Messias* was to receive special testimonies from God; let us now survey those, which were indeed by him exhibited to *Jesus* our Lord. There is indeed no kind or degree of attestation needful or proper, which hath not been largely from heaven afforded to him. God (so our Lord argueth) is in his own nature invisible, and indiscernable to any sense of ours; neither could we endure the lustre of his immediate presence, (*No man ever saw God, or can see him; there shall no man see him, and live.*) It must be therefore by mediation of signs, and works supernatural; the causing of which can only be imputed to him, as beyond the power of any creature to effect, or counterfeit; that he can assuredly signify his mind unto us; such only in approbation of any Person, Law or Doctrine can be expected from him; and such in divers kinds, and in great measures God hath, we say, furnished for the authorizing *Jesus*. Joh. 5. 36, 37. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Exod. 33. 20.

1. God did attest to him long before his coming into the world, by prefiguring and predicting concerning him, at several times, in several ways, by several persons (even by all the Prophets, and eminent Persons among his People of old) many things, even all things considerable about him; in exact congruity to the circumstances of his coming into the world (the time when, the place where, the Family whence, the manner how, the condition in which he was born) to the qualities of his Person, to the doctrine and law which he published, to all his undertakings, and performances, and sufferings, and to the successes consequent upon what he did. (This is a matter of very large consideration; which otherwhile we have insisted largely upon, and therefore shall now wave enlargement on it.)

2. God did in attestation to him immediately send before his face as his herald and harbinger a Prophet (or one for his admirable wisdom and sanctity of life somewhat more than a Prophet) who indeed without doing any miracle, by the prodigious integrity and strictness of his life, by the wonderful efficacy of his doctrine and discourse procured unto himself a reputation equalling or exceeding that of any former Prophet; (whom even *Josephus*, an indifferent Historian, reporteth a man of singular goodness, and great authority) to predispose the minds of men to receive him; by converting men to a serious reflection upon their lives, and amendment of their manners to prepare his way; as also to point him out, to foretel of him as presently coming, to testify of him as being come. This was he, to whom it well agreed, and who plainly did assume to himself that which was written by *Malachy*: *Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee*; of whom *Esay* (*John* himself being the avoucher and interpreter) said, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths streight*; who was, as *Malachy* did again signify, *to come in the spirit and power of Elias, to convert the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord*. Mal. 1. 3. Matt. 11. 10. Isa. 40. 3. John 1. 23. Mal. 4. 6. Luke 1. 17. John 1. 26. 15. 29. 34.

Matt. 3. 11. *Lord.* This most extraordinary and excellent Person did at several times and occasions attest unto Jesus, not only that he was incomparably for the dignity of his Person, and worth of his performances to be preferred before himself, and consequently before all other Prophets, but that he was the *very Christ, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world*: they sent to John, saith the Text, and he bare witness of the truth. God by him also foretold divers things concerning our Lord, which did really come to pass; as those words, uttered occasionally by many persons, do imply: *John indeed did do no miracle; but all things which John spake of this man were true.*

John 5. 33. 3. God attested unto our Lord by visible apparitions from heaven, at several times, in fit seasons, made in the sight and presence of very good witnesses: Angels appearing warned his good Father, and blessed Mother, concerning the time and manner of his coming into the world; Angels again appearing uttered tidings of his birth, joined with acclamations of praise to God, and gratulations of joy to men; Angels were vigilant for his safety, ministered unto him in his temptations and needs, assisted and comforted him in the agonies of his passion, waited upon him at his resurrection; an extraordinary Star (like that of the morning before the Sun) officiously did usher him into the world; at his baptism the Holy Ghost (in the symbolical figure of a Dove) appeared descending, and resting upon him, in the presence of S. John the Baptist (that most just and holy person, so taken and acknowledged by all men, even by his enemies and murderers; and a most competent witness, as who dared with utmost peril before the greatest persons to assert the truth,) He testified thereof, and said, *I saw the spirit of God descending from heaven as a Dove, and resting upon him.* Moses and Elias also (those most eminent instruments of God, and illustrious representatives of the Messiah) did from heaven in a most glorious and splendid manner attend upon him, in the presence of three most credible witnesses, Peter, James and John the Apostles; one of whom doth himself thus, with the due confidence of an eye-witness, report the fact: *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were spectators of his Majesty — being with him in the holy mountain.*

John 1. 31. 4. God also by vocal attestation did expressly at several times own and approve Jesus: at his Baptism in the audience of S. John the Baptist, and others present there: when, *Behold there was a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; the like heavenly voice was heard at the Transfiguration; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him*: So the Gospels report it; and thus S. Peter himself, a more immediate witness and attendant there: *He received from God the Father honour and glory, a voice being brought unto him from the magnificent glory; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice, which came from heaven we heard, being with him in the holy mount.* Again, a little before his Death, in presence of a multitude, upon Jesus his prayer, that God would by him glorify his name, an audible return was made from heaven: *There came (saith the Text) a voice from heaven, (saying) I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it.*

John 12. 28. 5. God attested to our Lord in that he was endued with a power constantly resident in him, of performing miraculous works, for nature and quality such, as could only proceed from a most divine power; not only thwarting the course of nature, but transcending the strength of any creature, and especially contrary to what any evil creature could, or would perform; this was a testimony beyond any humane testimony, and which our Lord insisted upon as such: *I (saith he) have a greater testimony than that of John, for the works, which the Father hath granted me, that I should perform them, those very works, which I do, they testify about me, that the Father hath sent me.*

John 5. 36. Works indeed he performed of a stupendious greatness and difficulty; all the creatures (the most unruly and boisterous, the most malignant and rebellious) beside their natures, and against their wills, did obey his commands: In a tempest he arose and rebuked the winds, and the sea, and there became a great calm, so that men did marvel, saying, *what manner of man is this, for even the winds and the sea obey him?* The sea stood firm for him and S. Peter to walk upon; he turned water into good wine; he unconceivably so improved a few loaves and little fishes as to feed and satisfy multitudes, leaving more behind than there was at first; he cured

cured the most incurable diseases, inveterate palsies, fluxes of blood, and lepro-
sies; he restored senses, and limbs wanting from the birth, or for a long time;
innumerable persons blind, deaf, dumb, lame and maimed he restored to the use
of their faculties, and members respectively, without any medicinal applications,
or any natural means conducive to those purposes; he restored lunatick persons
to their right wits, and dispossessed evil spirits, they not daring to disobey him,
and acknowledging his uncontrollable authority: *They were* (saith the Text) *a-*
mazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves saying; What thing is this?
what new doctrine is this; for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits,
and they do obey him. These were indeed works of excessive grandeur and diffi-
culty, but he did others far more great and hard, and these were greater for the
manner of performing them, than in their own nature; he did other acts so great,
that they were only to be done by an infinite power; and most of these he per-
formed in a manner which argued omnipotency present with the doer.

Works proper unto God he did many; such was discerning the thoughts, rea-
sonings, opinions and purposes of men, however concealed or disguised, where-
of we have many instances; and his intimate acquaintance, S. John, testifies of
him generally, saying, *He needed not that any should witness about a man, for he*
knew himself what was in man. Such was also to forgive sins, (a privilege only
belonging to the supreme Lord, and Law-giver, against whom sin is committed)
the which he assumed to himself, and irreprovably maintain'd it by exerting a
power equivalent thereto: *For whether* (saith he) *is it easier to say, thy sins be*
forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walk? but that you may know, that the son of man
hath power on earth to forgive sins: Then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take
up thy bed, and go to thine house; and he arose, and departed to his house: Such it was
likewise to foretell future contingencies; this he often did; as concerning his own
passion and resurrection, with all the circumstances of them; particularly the
treason of Judas; (*He knew, saith S. John, from the beginning who they were that*
did not believe, and who it was that should betray him.) Concerning S. Peter's
lapse, repentance and suffering; concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and ut-
ter demolition of the temple; concerning the persecutions which his Disciples
should undergo; concerning the communication of the Holy Ghost after his de-
cease, and the propagation of the Gospel in the world: Such was the foundation of
the Church upon a rock, against which *the gates of hell should not prevail:* Such again
it was to raise the dead, which he often performed; he raised the Ruler's daugh-
ter, and the Widow's son of Naim, and his friend Lazarus, and *The dead are*
raised, is reckoned among the ordinary miracles done by him, in the answer to S.
John the Baptist's disciples: These were acts of divine power, which no creature,
unassisted by God, could perform.

And considering the manner of performance such were both these, and most of
the rest; they in that respect emulating God's inimitable work of creation, and in
a manner seeming to exceed it; for that it seemeth harder to produce things out
of matter indisposed and repugnant, than to bring them out of mere nothing; as
God by mere word and will created things, when *He spake, and it was done, he*
commanded and it stood fast; so did Jesus in like manner by the efficacy of his com-
mand, or by actions equipollent thereto, without predisposing the subjacent mat-
ter, or using any natural instrument, accomplish his great and strange works: *He*
rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, peace, be still; so he quelled the storm: *I will,*
be thou cleansed; so he cured the leper: *Young man, I say unto thee, arise;* so he
revived the widow's son: *O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, as thou de-*
sirest; so he cured the Canaanitish womans possessed daughter: *He cried out, Laza-*
rus, come forth; and *the dead man* heard his voice, and presently
came forth out of the grave: He said *ephatha, be opened,* to the deaf man's ears;
they immediately heard, and obeyed: he said but one word, *and he saw again,*
to the blind man; and *without more ado he saw again:* he did
but *chide the great fever,* with which S. Peter's mother-in-law was troubled, and it
left her: he did but take the Ruler's daughter by the hand, and *the girl revived, and*
rose up: he only touched the two blind mens eyes, and so *their sight was restored:*
the woman, who had a flux of blood for twelve years, did but touch him, and
she thereupon *ipso facto, instantly was healed:* Yea multitudes of sick
persons together did only endeavour to touch the hem of his garment, and as many

as touched it were healed; there went virtue out of him, and he healed them all. When he used any thing like means, he (as S. Chrysostome observeth) proceeded in ways not only preternatural, but contrary to nature; as when he cured the blind man in S. John's Gospel, anointing his eyes with elay and spittle: διὰ πλεονάζοντος ἐπισκευῆς ἡ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀνέλιπε by a thing apt to increase (or strengthen) blindness he took it away. So great in nature, so high for manner of performance were the works of our Lord; they plainly were either the works, or they were done in the way of omnipotency.

They had also no less of goodness, than of greatness, divine; they were all of them plainly works of piety, or works of charity and pity; of a holy nature, and beneficial use; they were generally performed upon evidently reasonable occasions, or needs; for the succour and comfort of persons in some want or distress; or for instruction of the minds, and reformation of the manners of men; for healing the sick, feeding the hungry, easing the afflicted, restoring men to their senses, freeing them from the Devil's tyranny; for helping men in disappointment and need, or for encouraging kindness and good neighbourhood among people (to which purpose his first miracle done at Cana served) for instilling or impressing some wholesome truth, as when the fig-tree withered at his command; for encouraging dutiful submission to Governours; as when the fish was brought up with a piece of money in his mouth, furnishing him and S. Peter to pay tribute: In fine, the nature and importance of his works, S. Peter thus well expressed, saying of him; Ὁς ἀπῆλθεν διὰ τοῦ κόσμου, Who went about doing good (or benefiting men) and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil; for God was with him: and the Evangelist thus; Jesus went about all the cities, teaching in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people.

Considering which things, we may well discern by what power, and to what purpose Jesus did perform his admirable works; and may repel from our hearts all the cavils or calumnies forged by malicious and vain wits (such as those of Celsus and Julian) in derogation to them; we may particularly perceive how impudent-

Ἐργασάμενος παρ' οὐ ἕξιν χρόνον ἐδίδεν ἀκοὴν ἀξιόνη, ἐν ᾗ οἱ οἶστοι τῆς κυλλότητος, καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἰατρικὴν καὶ τῆς δαιμονώσεως ἐξορκίζεν ἐν Βεθσαιδᾷ, καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ταῖς κόμαις τῆς μερὶς τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ.

Cyri. adv. Jul. lib. 6.

ly false that suggestion was of the Apostate Emperor: who said that Jesus, while he lived did nothing worthy bearing, except one suppose to heal cripples, and blind folk, and to exercise Demoniacs in the villages Bethsaida, and Bethany, to be great works: in opposition to which kind of suggestion, and for abundant confirmation of our purpose, we may consider

some advantageous circumstances, and concomitances of our Lord's performances.

They were, we may observe, not some few things done at one time, or in one place, among friends and partisans; but innumerable many and frequent (a world of things, more than well could be recited, as Saint John telleth us) done thro' a long course of time (for some years together) in several places, before all sorts of people, many of them very ill affected towards him. They were not done clandestinely in a blind corner, among rude and simple people, but openly and visibly every where about Judea, the most lightsome place for knowledge and goodness in the world; where the best worship of God most flourished, and all Diabolical impostures were most detested, in the places there most publick and conspicuous; so he could affirm and admonish them; I spake freely to the world, I always taught in the synagogues, and in the temple, where the Jews from all places resort, and in secret have I done nothing: they were done so apparently, that the people generally saw them, and acknowledged them; that scarce any man could be ignorant of them; that the most learned and considerate men took it for granted, that they were done; that adversaries could not deny the performance of them, although out of envy and ill-will they were ready to impute it to the worst causes devisable; that many of all sorts were convinced, and divers converted by them: as for the people, Great multitudes (saith S. Matthew, one present, and a follower of our Lord) came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others; and cast them down at Jesus his feet, and he healed them; insomuch that the multitude wondred, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel: and, The people marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel; but the Pharisees said, He casteth

casteth out Devils by the Prince of the Devils: the matter of fact they could not offer, against conviction of sense, to question, but malice prompted perversly, and foolishly to assign a bad cause thereof; the matter was so notorious, that S. Peter could thus confidently appeal to the whole Nation: *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved (or demonstrated) unto you by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by him in the midst of you; as you yourselves know.* The adversaries (such whom superstitious prejudices, obstinate humours, or corrupt affections, envy, pride, ambition, avarice, or the like, had made adversaries to him) did not only see the thing, but were affrighted with its consequence: *The chief Priests (tis said) and the Pharisees gathered a counsel together, and said; What shall we do? for this man doeth many wonders: if we let him alone, all men will believe on him: Yes indeed notwithstanding all this watchful caution, and fine policy of theirs, notwithstanding all the opposition and discouragement they could interpose, all their struglings to smother his credit and doctrine, many were in their hearts convinced, even divers of such as were unwilling to believe; and ashamed, or afraid to avow their persuasion: Also (tis said again) of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: Nicodemus, an honest and ingenuous person, a man of honour, (but somewhat wary and timorous) came secretly, and in the name (it seemeth) of many persons alike disposed with himself, thus spake: Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a teacher from God: for no man can do those things which thou doest, except God be with him: As for the generality of the people (the most concerned in such cases as to point of honour and interest, and thence the most impartial and sincere party) they following their senses were greatly affected, and astonished with what he did; taking him for a very extraordinary person; some in a gross and confused manner, others in a more distinct way of belief: Some said he was John the Baptist, others that he was Elias; others Jeremias or one of the ancient Prophets risen up again; but many of the people (more fully and exactly) believed on him, saying, when Christ cometh will he do more miracles than this man hath done?*

We may also observe, that Jesus did not affect to perform wonders out of vanity, or to humour mens curiosity, but always upon inducements of piety and charity: most of them were performed occasionally at the desire of men, suggested by their needs; and all of them for their edification or comfort: that he therefore did not seek by them to acquire reputation, or applause to himself; nor by them designed to advance any private interest of his own, but singly aimed at the promotion of God's glory in them all: that in effect no secular advantage of dignity, or wealth, or pleasure did from them accrue to himself; but rather disgrace and obliquy, hatred and enmity, trouble and pain did from them befall him; all the glory of them purely coming to God, and all the benefit to men. As he charged his disciples, so he practised himself, doing all *gratis*, and freely without expecting or accepting any requital. He often studiously concealed his miracles, forbidding those who were concerned in them, or conscious of them to publish them; so striving to decline, or to stifle the honour, naturally emergent from them. When it was necessary or expedient they should appear, he disclaimed being the principal author of them, referring and ascribing them to God: *I can (said he) do nothing of my self; and, The word that I speak to you I speak not of my self; but the Father who abides in me, he doeth the works: and, I seek not mine own glory; I receive not glory of men;* thus he professed, and so he practised: consequently the effect was, that (as it is expressed in the Gospels) *Fear*, or a pious reverence, *did seize all men; and they glorified God, saying that a great Prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people: All the people seeing it gave praise to God: All men were amazed at the mighty power (or majesty) of God; when the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men;* And doth not so much glory from his performances resulting to God, so good an influence upon the hearts of men, evidently shew, whence the power effecting them was derived? would the Devil be such an instrument of God's praise?

We may also with S. Irenæus observe, that Jesus in performing his cures, and other miraculous works, did never use any profane, silly, phantastick ceremonies, any muttering of barbarous names, or insignificant phrases; any invocation of spirits,

spirits, or inferior powers; any preparatory purgations, any mysterious circumstances of proceeding, apt to amuse people; any such unaccountable methods or instruments, as *Magicians, Inchanters, Diviners, circulatorious Juglers*, and such emissaries of the Devil, or self-seeking *Impostors* are wont to use; but did proceed altogether in a most innocent, simple and grave manner, with a majestick authority and clear sincerity, becoming such an Agent of God, as he professed himself to be.

That also the whole tenour of his proceedings was directly levelled against the Kingdom of darkness; against all the impiety, all the malice, all the filthiness, and all the fallacy thereof; at the casting wicked and impure spirits not only from the bodies, but out of the souls of men; causing men not only to detest and defy them, but to loath their qualities, and to eschew their works; that is that binding, disarming, rifling and dispossessing *the strong one*, which *Jesus* alledged as an infallible argument; that he was not only no friend, but a mighty enemy to the infernal powers; an enemy not only in disposition and design quite contrary, but in virtue and force highly superior to them: That we should worship God alone with most hearty reverence and love; that we should bear the same clear good will to all men, as we do to our selves; that we should be strictly just, veracious and sincere in our words and dealings, meek and humble in our spirits, pure and sober in all our enjoyments (things perfectly opposite to the temper and interests of hell) were things, which as our Lord constantly in his doctrine did inculcate, so he countenanced and furthered them by his works; from whence assuredly we may collect, that they came from heaven, and were intended for the promoting God's service: Hell would never contribute so much to its own disgrace and disadvantage, would never so industriously concur to defeat and destroy it self; God plainly reaped the benefit by *Jesus* his works, he therefore certainly did plant them, and bless them.

Luke 11. 21.
Matt. 12. 29.
Tertull. Apol.
23.

Upon these considerations it appeareth sufficiently, that in correspondence to the reason and exigency of the case, our Lord did perform innumerable works, which had impressed on them the truest and highest characters of Divinity; the most peculiar grandeur, and perfectest goodness; the purest holiness of design, and the beneficial tendency proper to the works issuing from divine power; so that supposing God should send the *Messias* into the world, or any great Ambassador from himself, he could scarce possibly, he should not at least, all things considered, need to furnish him with more convincing attestations, than he hath exhibited to our Lord. Whence we may well apprehend the validity of that argument, which our Lord himself suggested for assurance of *S. John the Baptist* in his opinion concerning him, or rather for the satisfaction of *S. John's Disciples*; when *John* sent two of his Disciples, with this inquiry, *Art thou he, or look we for another?* *Jesus* thus replied: *Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen, and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached; And blessed is he, who ever shall not be offended in me.*

Matt. 11. 5.
Luke 7. 22.

6. God most signally did attest to our Lord by miraculously raising him from the dead; or in that by a divine power he raised up himself from the grave; which work for the singular greatness, and high consequence thereof, together with the certain evidence that it was really performed, might alone suffice to confirm the verity of all our Lord's pretences; [that he was the true *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the World*, the *Lord of all things*, the *Judge of all the World*;] most efficaciously to evince and persuade the most eminent and important parts of his doctrine (the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, the just and wise providence of God over men, the dispensation of rewards and punishments hereafter, answerable to mens conversation and practice in this life.) This indeed is the point, which invincibly guardeth and fortifieth all other testimonies; but it is so pregnant of considerations belonging to it, that it deserveth more time and room than we now can yield it; wherefore we chuse rather at present to pass it over than slightly to touch it, reserving it for a peculiar subject of discourse.

7. A farther attestation was given to our Lord by the power of doing miracles in his name imparted to his Disciples; who by him were appointed and authorized to prosecute the great design commenced by himself: not only his Person, but even his Name did great wonders; it cured diseases, it cast out Devils, it

it surmounted nature, and subdued hell : whereby he indeed appears for especial favour with God, personal excellency, dignity of office, importance of undertaking incomparably to have surpassed all former Prophets, and commissioners of God, by whose ministry any Law, Covenant or Doctrine hath been conveyed to men ; never by delegation, or independence upon any other person, never in any other person's Name were such works done. To the XII Apostles at their first mission he among other instructions enjoined thus ; *Cure the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out Devils ; Ye have freely received, freely give :* To the LXX Disciples, sent out by himself to instill the rudiments of his doctrine, and to admonish people of his approach, he gave this commission and charge ; *In any city, into which you enter, heal those which are sick therein ; and say unto them, the kingdom of heaven is come near unto you* — he then adds ; *Behold I give you power to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy ;* the success was, that *They returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us through thy name.* At his departure he promised and foretold thus : *These signs shall follow them that believe ; in my name they shall cast out Devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover :* All which things were abundantly fulfilled ; for a liberal communication of divine power was granted to them, enabling them to perform the greatest works ; so that (as S. Luke telleth us) *By the hands of the Apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people ;* the performance of which was so notorious, that upon knowledge, and in confidence thereof, *There came (saith the holy Historian) a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one.* * The like power also was by the Apostles derived unto others, in such kind and measure, as the carrying on Jesus his great design (the propagation of God's truth, and the edification of his Church) did require ; by succession it was transmitted through several ages, and visibly continued so long, as such extraordinary means were useful or expedient for the conviction and conversion of the world : Most of the first Fathers of the Church do expressly testify concerning remainders thereof in their times : *It is not possible (saith S. Irenaeus for one instance, among others innumerable) to tell the number of the graces (or special gifts) which the Church through the whole world receiving from God doth in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate, daily perform for the succour of the nations, &c.* And remarkable is the confidence of Tertullian, reporting the effects of this power in his time : he in his Apologetick speech for the Christians even dares to provoke the Ethnic Governors to trial, and to lay the issue concerning not only the truth of Christian doctrine, but the lives and safety of its professors thereon ; *Let, saith he, any person, manifestly possessed with the Devil, or one who is deemed to be rapt with a divine fury, be set before your tribunals ; that spirit, being commanded by a Christian to speak, shall as truly there confess himself to be a Devil, as elsewhere a God — If he do not so confess, not daring to lye, even there spill the blood of that procacious Christian : What (adds he) is more manifest, than that work ? what more faithful than that probation ? Stand not to these sayings, if your eyes and ears will suffer you.* The like assertions and challenges might be produced out of divers other Fathers.

Neither perhaps is the communication of this divine virtue so ceased now, that it would be wanting upon any needful occasion ; the frequent performance of such works among them in whom faith by abundance of other competent means may be produced and confirmed, unto whom also the first miracles are virtually present by the help of history and good reason, is indeed no-wise necessary, nor perhaps would be convenient ; but did the same pious zeal for God's honour, and the same charitable earnestness for mens good, excite any persons now to attempt the conversion of Infidels to the sincere Christian truth, I see no reason to doubt, but that such persons would be enabled to perform whatever miraculous works should conduce to that purpose ; for *the Lord's hand is not shortened, the grace of Christ is not straitened, the name of Jesus hath not lost its virtue.*

8. God did attest to our Lord by accomplishing his prediction and promise, in a plentiful effusion of the divine spirit upon his Church and Disciples, for their perfect instruction and guidance, for their support and comfort, for enabling them

Omnia hac nomina in illos dominatio & potestas de Christi nominatione valere. Tertull. Apol. 23.

Acts 3. 16.

Matt. 10. 8.

Lui. 10. 9. 19.

Luke 10. 17.

Mark 16. 17.

Apol. 23.

Acts 2. 4.

Acts 2. 43.

5. 12.

Acts 8. 17.

* Heb. 2. 4.

Rom. 15. 18.

Iren. 2. 48.

Tertull. Apol.

23.

The Lord's hand

is not shortened

the grace of

Christ is not

straitened

the name of

Jesus hath

not lost its

virtue.

John 15. 26.

Acts 5. 32.

John 5. 7. 8.

1 Cor. 12.

* Acts 10. 45.

John 15. 26. to convince and convert men to him; *When* (said our Lord to them before his
 1 John 5. 7, 8. decease, concerning this attestation) *the comforter is come, whom I will send to you
 from my Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall
 Luke 24. 49. testify of me:* and, *Tarry ye* (said he again, after his resurrection) *in the city of
 Act. 1. 4. 2. 33. Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

Acts 4. 31. Accordingly soon after our Lord's ascension, as the Holy Spirit was conspicu-
 8. 17. 10. 44. ously dispensed, upon various occasions, in divers proportions, and in different
 11. 15. 13. 52. ways, according to the exigencies of things for the edification and enlargement
 19. 6. of the Church; so especially at *Pentecost* it was in a most solemn manner, and
 1 Cor. 12. abundant measure poured forth upon the whole Church, and each member of it;
 For then (saith S. Luke the disciples (to the number of one hundred and twenty per-
 sons) being gathered together — with one accord, in one place; — suddenly there
 Acts 1. 15. came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind (which was a most proper
 Acts 2. 1. emblem of the Holy Spirit's nature and powerful efficacy) and it filled all the
 house where they were sitting (which then typified the Catholick Church, through
 which the Holy Spirit was to be diffused, to animate and actuate it) And there ap-
 peared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, (denoting the various gifts and graces,
 imparted for expression of God's praise and propagation of his truth, which
 were to be enlivened by fervent charity, zeal and devotion) and it sat upon each
 of them; implying that every faithful Christian constantly should partake of this
 heavenly benefit, according to his need: And they were all filled with the Holy
 Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance: that
 is, they were perfectly inspired, so that each was endowed with the gift of speak-
 ing a language before unknown to him; which was a miracle very great, and
 most pertinent; to learn a strange tongue requiring much time and great pains;
 the speaking such tongues being then very serviceable to the promulgation of the
 Gospel: All which event was very publick and notorious; for that at that
 Festival-time There were (saith the Divine Historian) dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews,
 devout men out of every nation under heaven: Now when this was noised about, the
 multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak
 in his own language, — the wonderful things of God.

This was therefore a general attestation to our Lord, pregnant and clear as
 could be, both for conviction of unbelievers, and confirmation of the faithful;
 the which effects it had, so that in virtue thereof, Saint Peter having explained the
 design of it, *Three thousand souls were added to the Church;* and all did continue
 stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship.

Besides also it was an illustrious pledge of that inestimable gift, to be perpetu-
 ally communicated to the Church for its edification; and to each Christian for his
 direction and assistance in religious practice, according to the Evangelical cove-
 nant; the which is a standing witness, attesting to our Lord, in the heart and
 conscience of every good man, according to that of S. Peter; *And we are his
 witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them
 that obey him:* He indeed keeping his residence, and exerting his power in all
 pious souls; shining into their minds with the true heavenly light (that pure and
 perfect wisdom, which is from above) kindling charity, devotion, comfort and joy
 in their hearts; supporting them in trials and temptations, raising their affections
 and desires above this present transitory world, disposing them to relish spiritual
 things, and to entertain themselves with the hopes of future blessedness, doth
 assure them, that *Jesus is the Lord,* doth seal to them the truth of his doctrine,
 the reality of his promises, the efficacy of his grace, the wonderful greatness of
 his love and goodness toward them; so that hence that is abundantly verified,
 which S. John telleth us, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in
 himself.*

There are divers other considerable attestations to our Lord, such as the divine
 sublimity of his doctrine, discovering it self to enlightned minds to shine from
 heaven; the testimony of God's spirit to the hearts and consciences of good and
 faithful people, assuring them that *Jesus is the Lord,* and sealing to them the
 truth of his doctrine; the operation of God's grace in production of moral ver-
 tues, or the purgation of heart and amendment of life flowing from faith in him,
 the efficacy of prayers in his name offered to God; all the joys, and comforts,
 and happy fruits springing from Christian devotion; the good effects the Gospel
 hath

hath had in reformation of the world inducing many great benefits, and preventing mischiefs therein: But these, and the like being not so publick, so distinctly observable, so easily drawn into argument apt to convince the incredulous, I shall pass over; adding but one more of a more general and conspicuous nature.

*Ὁ πῶς
αὐτὸς ὁ ἰδὼν
τοῦ
μαρτυροῦντος
ἐαυτῶν.*

9. *Lastly*, God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his Gospel in its conveyance and propagation: its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest oppositions, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of its self, accomplished by means to appearance so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of providence against the course of humane affairs, than the rest performed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power of natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency: the work was a *victory over the world*, and over hell, achieved by the *faith of Jesus*; and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause it self which they maintained for him.

They were *not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but a very few*, mean ^{2 Cor. 1. 26.} and poor, unlearned and simple men, whom no outward circumstances commended to humane regard, no worldly advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to support them in their endeavours: a few fishermen, publicans, tent-makers, and other persons of like quality, education, improvement and capacity, were the instruments of this great work; those brave souldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array against all his adversaries; and what adversaries were they? who,

*Ἀγροῦμοι,
καὶ ἰδιώται.
Ἀκτ. 4. 13.*

but all the majesty and authority, all the force and violence, all the policy and craft, all the wit, learning, wisdom and eloquence, all the passion and rage of men, all the power, cunning and malice of the cursed spirits; in short, all the forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined against them. They were to check and controll the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty Emperours and Potentates; whose assumed Divine honours they decried as vain and wicked, whose commands they reprehended as unjust and impious, to whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints, declaring them obliged to contain their practice within bounds of piety, equity and temperance: they were to suppress the credit, and the gain of all Priests, or Ministers of Religion in the world, whose doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose practices they reprov'd as vile and damnable: they were to confute all the subtilty of Philosophers, all the eloquence of Orators, all depths of learning, and improvements of reason or wit; impugning the opinions famous and current among men as false, or slighting them as frivolous: they were to overbear, and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by natural inclination and temper, by countenance of long tradition and custom; by education, by publick laws, and also mighty enforcements: they were to charge with reproach all ages past, and the Ancestors of all people in the world (those of one small people only in part excepted) of very gross ignorance and error, of sottish folly, of heinous wickedness and impiety: they were to sustain all the slanders, reproaches and persecutions which the resolute opposing so many interests, humours and opinions inevitably would produce: they were beside vigorously to assault Satan, and all his complices; to beat down his worship, and overturn his domination; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

Clem. Alex. well says, that no Philosophy would have endured such a test, or endured such a shock of persecution.

Καὶ τὴν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν ἑλληνικὴν ἰδὼν ὁ πῶς ἄνθρωπος καλῶς οἶκται ἀδύνατον, τὴν δὲ ἡμετέραν, &c. Strom. 6. (p. 502.)

Καὶ τὰς γυναικῶν δόξαν καλλυμένην γυναικῶν περὶ τὸ μὴ ἐπικρατεῖν τὴν ἰσθμὸν διδασκαλίας τῆς οἰκουμένης. Orig. cont. Cell. 7. (p. 349.)

All these great exploits they were to achieve in a most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most plain and simple, without any terrour or tumult, any slight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or subtilty of reasoning; without applying either any rude violence, or sly allurements: they were indeed little more than barely to report a story, and to affirm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in connexion with that story some plain honest rules of life here in this world, and denouncing some consequences on the belief of their story, and the practice of their rules in another world hereafter. These things it was their business to tell simply, and to averr confidently, charging men at their utmost peril

^{1 Cor. 4. 5.}

capitulate and explain in what manner, and in what respects the *New Testament* represents him as *Christ*; how according to that *Jesus* was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all the offices denoted by the title *Christ* (the office *Prophetical*, *Regal* and *Sacerdotal*) and how he effectually doth execute them.

Him (saith S. Peter in general) God anointed with the Holy Spirit and Power: Acts 10. 38. God anointed him not with an external affusion of material oil (as neither were the *Patriarchs*, nor King *Cyrus*, who are yet called *the Christs of God*) that was only a ritual and symbolical business; but with a real infusion of divine grace and power, qualifying and enabling him perfectly to execute all those great and extraordinary functions. With this gladsome oil he was thoroughly anointed and replenish'd above measure; with this he was *sanctified from the womb*; when the power of the highest did overshadow him at his Conception; with this at his Baptism he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when the heavens were opened unto him, and the spirit of God descended upon him as a Dove and came upon him; with this in all the course of his life and ministry he was continually accompanied; the virtue of it being discovered and diffused in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, wonderful and glorious performances, for the honour of God, and the benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed minds: God anointed *Jesus of Nazareth* (saith S. Peter Acts 10. 38. in the Acts) with the Holy Ghost; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him. He was by this Spiritual unction constituted in right, and in effect a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest*.

I. First, a *Prophet*; For they were not mistaken, who, upon his raising the widows child, were amazed, and glorified God, saying, that a Great Prophet was raised up among them, and that God had visited his people. Nor they (in S. John's Gospel) who reflecting upon another great miracle (feeding multitudes with five loaves, and two little pickled fishes) brake into this confession; *This is in truth that prophet, who was to come into the world.* And the disciples well described him, who styled him, *A Prophet mighty in word and deed, before God and all the people.* He was so, as having an extraordinary commission from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by express testimony of S. John the Baptist (the Person of most remarkable sanctity and greatest authority in his time) by the performance of innumerable and incomparable signs and works miraculous (arguments in the highest degree, and to the utmost possibility sufficient to assert and confirm it.) He was also in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function, by inspiration complete and unlimited; by disposition of mind altogether pure and holy (expressed in a continual practice of life void of all sin and guile; by an insuperable courage and constancy, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning sweetness and goodness, a most powerful awfulness and majesty, shining in all his discourse and demeanour) Sutable also to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person were the weight, and the extent of the doctrine he in God's name revealed; It concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, and reconciliation of the world to God; the intire will of God, and whole duty of man: with all the laws and precepts, the covenants and conditions, the promissings and threatnings relating to our future state. He did not (as other Prophets have done) prophecy about the constitution of one particular Law, Religion or Covenant; about the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment or fate determined to one Nation, but his design reached to the instruction and conversion of all people, in all places, through all times, to the setting of a Law and Covenant absolutely universal and perpetual; Misteries he brought forth never before revealed, and decrees never to be reversed; to the final doom of all the world did his prophetic denunciations extend. So is he a *Prophet*. Such he was in his temporal appearance, and administrations upon earth; and such he continues for ever in heaven; from thence upon all occasions by his Holy Spirit imparting to his faithful people all needful instruction in truth, direction in practice, admonition to duty, and comfort in trouble. He is also such by the ministry of his servants, whom he hath appointed, and whom he assists, to instruct and guide us.

Psal. 45. 7.
Luke 4. 1.
John 3. 34.
Matt. 3. 16.
Luke 4. 22.

Acts 10. 38.

John 6.

Luke 7. 16.

John 6. 14.

Luke 24. 16.

1st John 1. 9.
2nd John 1. 7.
3rd John 1. 8.
Matt. 23. 8.

1st Pet. 2. 22.
2nd Cor. 5. 21.
1st John 3. 5.

2. He is also a *King*; by many unquestionable Titles; Of a great and extensive authority, exercising it to the best effects and purposes. He is a *King* by nature and birth: as the only Son of God, partaker of his eternal power and majesty; For therefore to him it was said; *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the scepter of thy Kingdom is a right scepter*; and as the son of David; For of him the Angel said— *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign over the house of David for ever; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end.*

He is also a *King* by divine designation and appointment. For, *Let all the house of Israel (saith S. Peter) know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ; and, The father hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the son of man (or as such.)* He is also *King* by merit and purchase; for, *He for the suffering of death was crowned with glory and honour; He was obedient to death, even the death of the cross; Therefore God super-exalted him, and bestowed on him a name above every name. To this end he both died and rose again, that he might Lord it over both the dead and living.* He is *King* also by conquest; having delivered us out of the power of darkness, and freed us from the vassalage of sin; having spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them openly, and triumphed over them; having delivered us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; that we being delivered from our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. He is also a *King* by our election and free choice, we having voluntarily put our selves under his protection, and submitted to his command, and taken upon our selves his yoke, and vowed everlasting fealty to him in our Baptism. Such a right he hath of Governing.

As for the extent of his Kingdom, it is in all respects boundless, both for place and time; 'tis universal and perpetual. He is the *Eternal King* of all the world: God hath so exalted him and given him a name above all names, *That to the name of Jesus every should bend, whether of things in heaven, or things upon earth, or things under the earth. To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb by every creature in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth are jointly to be ascribed the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the power, for ever and for ever.* He is constituted *above all rule, and authority, and domination, and every name that is named not only in this world, but in that which is to come: 'tis his just title and proper badge, The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; to whom all Nations are vassals, yea all creatures are subject and tributary.* But he in especial manner is *King* over his Church; that peculiar people, whom he hath especially purchased to himself by his merits and blood: whom he hath subdued to his obedience by the sword of his Word, and by the prevailing virtue of his Spirit, that mystical *Sion*, in which 'tis said that God will place his reign and residence for ever; that heavenly city, whereof all the Saints are fellow citizens, and he the sovereign Head and Governour; God hath (saith S. Paul) put all things under his feet, and hath given him head above all things to the Church. In respect to which both the Evangelical dispensation here, and the future state of bliss hereafter are called the *Kingdom of heaven*. Over this he reigns, enjoying all Royal prerogatives, exercising all Royal administrations, and dispensing most Royal munificences. He hath in this his Kingdom established most righteous and wholesome laws; the which his subjects are by him obliged and enabled to obey. He constantly defendeth and protecteth his subjects from all invasions and assaults of their enemies (intestine enemies, their own lusts; external enemies, the Devil and the World.) He provides for all their needs and wants; he supports them in all their distresses and troubles. He exercises judgment over them; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity (most liberal rewards to the loyal and obedient; most severe punishments upon obstinate offenders and rebels.) He lastly restrains and suppresses, defeats and destroys all the adversaries to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual.

Out of his mouth (as it is in the *Apocalypse*) there goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. These mine enemies (he shall one day say) which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me. He must reign (saith S. Paul) till he hath put all enemies under his feet. Thus is he a *King* endued with sovereign right and power; crowned with glorious Majesty; enjoying all pre-eminences, and exercising all acts suitable to Regal dignity.

3. He

g. He is likewise a Priest, and that much above an ordinary one; *ὑπερῷον ἱερέως*. He hath obtained a more excellent function (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) than ever any other Priest had. Every High Priest (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices. He did (as such) once offer up an oblation, in worth and excellency far surpassing all the sacrifices and oblations that ever were made (all the fattest *Hecatombs* that were ever sacrificed, all the gold and precious stones that ever were dedicated, all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled into incense, upon altar, were but vile and fordid, were ineffectual and unacceptable in comparison thereto) a willing oblation he made upon the altar of his cross of himself (his most innocent, most pure, most spotless and unblemished self) of his most glorious body (the Temple of the Divinity) of his most precious blood, of his dear life, for the life, of the world, and redemption of mankind; for the propitiation of our sins, and the sins of the whole world; an oblation which alone could appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, and merit his favour toward us.

He doth also (which is another sacerdotal performance) intercede for us; He intercedes as an Advocate for the pardon of our sins (If any man sin, we have an advocate with (or to) the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.) He intercedes for the acceptance of our services (whence we are enjoined to do all things, to pray, to give thanks in his Name) for the granting our requests; for grace and assistance; for comfort and reward; for all spiritual blessings and advantages to be conferred upon us; he thus pursuing the work of salvation by his propitiatory sacrifices begun for us; whence (as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith) He is able to save to the uttermost those that by him come to God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

He doth also perform the Priestly function of blessing. Blessing the people in God's name, and blessing God in the peoples behalf; as did that illustrious Type of his *Melchisedec* (Blessed, said he, be Abram of the most High God, possessor of heaven and earth; and, Blessed be the most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.) So hath Jesus effectually pronounced all joy and happiness to his faithful people; He pronounced blessedness to them in his Sermons; He blessed his disciples at his parting; Lifting up his hands he blessed them, saith S. Luke, God in him (saith S. Paul) hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or in heavenly things) and, God (saith S. Peter) having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us in turning every one of us from his iniquity: and at the last day he will utter that comfortable benediction: Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. So is Jesus a true and perfect Priest. And,

So finally in all respects is Jesus God's anointed, and the Christ of God: as the great Prophet, and Doctor; as the Sovereign King and Prince: as the High Priest and Advocate of his Church. And indeed, that he is so is the Fundamental Point of our Religion; which the Apostles did peculiarly testify, preach and persuade; the sincere belief of which doth constitute and denominate us Christians.

IV. The consideration whereof ought to beget in us a practice answerable to the relations between him and us, grounded thereupon.

If Jesus be such a Prophet, we must with careful attention, and a docile mind hearken to his admonitions and instructions; we must yield a steady belief to all his doctrine, and we must adhere constantly thereto, and we must readily obey and practice what he teaches.

If he be a King we must maintain our due allegiance to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs.

If he be a Priest, we must with sincere faith and hope apply our selves unto him for, and rely upon his spiritual ministeries in our behalf; sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by virtue of his Sacrifice; the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession; all comfort, joy and felicity in consequence of his effectual benediction. Having (so the Apostle to the Hebrews admonisheth us) a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

In short, if Jesus be Christ, let us be Christians; Christians, not only in name, in outward profession, in speculation and opinion, but in very deed and reality, in our heart and affection, in all our conversation and practice. Let every one that

that nameth the name of Christ (that is, who confesseth Jesus to be Christ, and himself to be his follower) depart from iniquity.

Now the God of peace, that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

His Only Son.

S E R M O N XXI.

JOHN I. 14.

And we beheld his glory; the glory as of the only begotten of the father.

John 1. 18.
3. 16, 18.
1 John 4. 9.



THAT Jesus Christ our Lord is the *only Son of God*, that is, the Son of God in a peculiar and high manner, otherwise far than any creature can be so termed, S. John doth here (and in several other places) suppose, or assert plainly; And it is a great point of the Christian doctrine, a special object of our faith. To shew the truth of which, to explain how it is to be understood, and to apply the consideration thereof to our practice, shall be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

1. That the *Messias*, designed by God to come into the world for the restoring and reconciling mankind unto God, was in an especial manner to be the Son of God, even the ancient Prophets did foretel and presignify: *Thou art my son, this day I have begotten thee*, saith God of him in the second Psalm. And of him, that which in the first less perfect sense was spoken to King Solomon (who as the son and heir of David, as the builder of God's house, as a Prince of peace, reigning in great glory, wealth and prosperity; as endued with incomparable wisdom, did most signally represent and prefigure him) was chiefly intended for him, and did more exactly agree to him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever*: and again; *He shall cry unto me, thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation: Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth*. And accordingly it was, even before our Saviour's appearance, a persuasion commonly passing among the Jews (both learned and unlearned) that the *Messias* should be the Son of God; as may be collected from several passages in the *New Testament*; in which being the Christ, and being the Son of God are conjoined as inseparable adjuncts, whereof one did imply the other, according to the sense then current, and previous to the embracing our Lord's doctrine. For Nathaniel we see was no sooner persuaded, that Jesus was the Christ, but he (according to his anticipation, common to the people) confesseth thus: *Rabbi, thou art the son of God; Rabbi, thou art the king of Israel*. Martha in like manner being moved to declare her faith concerning Jesus, expresseth it thus: *Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the son of God, which should come into the world*: and likewise doth S. Peter, in the name of all his brethren, the Apostles: *We have believed, and have known, that thou art the Christ, the son of the living God*. S. John the Baptist also, doth thus express his belief and yield his testimony concerning Jesus: *And I said, and bare record, that this is the son of God*. Yea even the High-Priest himself implied the same, when examining our Lord he said: *Art thou the Christ, the son of the Blessed? I adjure thee by the living*

Psal. 2. 7.
Heb. 1. 5.
Acts 13. 33.

1 Chr. 22. 10.
28. 6.
2 Sa. 7. 13.
Pla. 89. 26, 27.
Heb. 1. 5.

John 1. 49.

John 11. 27.
6. 69.

Matt. 16. 16.

John 1. 34.

Mark 14. 61.
Matt. 26. 63.

ing God tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God: supposing that to be the Christ, and to be the son of God would concur in the same person. Yea the Devils themselves had learned this, who cried out, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God?* Matt. 8. 29. Mark 1. 24. Luke 4. 41. 34.

Thus did the ancient Scriptures intimate, and thus were God's People generally persuaded about the *Messias*; and that he is indeed the son of God, the Evangelical Scripture doth every where reach us, calling him not only at large *the son of God*, but more emphatically the *ἀγαπῆς* (*the darling son of God*) the *ὁ ἀγαπῆς* Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18. 17. 5. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 13. Rom. 8. 32. John 5. 18. 1 John 1. 20. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 6. *son of God's love*, the *ὁ ἀγαπῆς* Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18. 17. 5. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 13. Rom. 8. 32. John 5. 18. 1 John 1. 20. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 6. *God's true son* (that is, such most properly, in a most excellent manner incomparably representing and resembling God) the *ὁ ἀγαπῆς* (*God's proper, or peculiar son*) the *πρωτόγονος*, *God's first-born*; God's *ὁ ἀγαπῆς* Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18. 17. 5. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 13. Rom. 8. 32. John 5. 18. 1 John 1. 20. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 6. *his only begotten son*: all which epithets import somewhat of peculiar eminence in the kind and ground of this his relation unto God. The relation itself in a large sense, and equivocally is attributed to several: *Adam* is called *the son of God*; and the *Angels* are usually entituled such; and *Princes* are styled *the children of the most high*; and all men are said to be *God's off-spring*, and *Good men* are especially dignified with that appellation; *God's people* as such (the *Israelites* of old, and *Christians* now) are the *children of God*; Yea, God is the *Father of all things*, as the Maker and preserver of them: But all these, in comparison to *Christ*, are such in a manner very inferiour, and in a very improper sense; for he is the *Only son of God*; which denotes a relation in its kind singular, and incomparable; from which all other things are excluded.

Now that we may discern the difference, let us consider the grounds and respects upon which this relation of our Saviour to God is built, or the reasons why he is called the son of God: There are several expressed or implied in Scripture.

1. *Christ* is called the *son of God* in regard to his temporal generation, as being in a manner extraordinary conceived in the *Blessed Virgin* by the *Holy Ghost*; so the *Angel* expressly telleth us: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the son of God*: So the *Apostle* also: *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman* (or born of a woman, *γεννητὸν ἐκ ἁνθρώπου* in some Copies). A generation so peculiar and wonderful, without intervention of any father but God himself, is one ground of this relation and title; he therein excelling the common sort of men. Luke 1. 35. Τὸ πνεῦμα ῥοῦ ὑπερῶν Gal. 4. 4. Luke 1. 32. He shall be great and shall be called the son of the highest, and God shall give him the throne of his father David.

2. *Christ* also may be termed the *Son of God* in regard to his resurrection by divine efficacy; that being a kind of generation, or introduction into another state of life immortal. Others are upon this ground called the sons of God: * *They* (saith our Saviour) *who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead — can die no more; for they are equal to the Angels, and are the children of God* (*οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ*) being sons of the resurrection. How much more then may he be thence so named, who is the first fruits of them that sleep, and the first-born from the dead: especially since that of the *Psalmist*, *Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee*, was (according to *S. Paul's* exposition) verified in the raising him. In this respect *Christ* also did much excel all others, who upon the same ground are called the Sons of God. Vides iste quem tanquam extremum reformationis natalis est. Sen. Eoist. 102. * Luk. 20. 35. 36. 1 Cor. 15. 20. 23. Col. 1. 18. Apoc. 1. 5. Acts 26. 23. 3. 15. 13. 32. 33.

3. *Christ* is capable of this Title by reason of that high office, in which by God's especial designation he was entated. If ordinary *Princes* and *Judges* (as being deputed by God to represent himself in the dispensation of justice; or as resembling God in the exercise of their power and authority) have been called *the children of the most High*, in the language of *Holy Scripture*; with how much greater truth and reason may he be called so, who was most signally consecrated and commissioned to the most eminent Function that ever was or could be; who did whatever he did in God's name, who represented and resembled God so exactly? It is his own argumentation and inference: *If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him, whom the father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the son of God?* The extraordinary sanctification and mission did render him worthy and capable of that Appellation, far beyond all others, who have for the like reason obtained it. Psal. 82. 6. 29. John 30. 36.

4. Whereas also it is said, that God did appoint, or constitute our Saviour heir of all things; did give him Head above all things in the Church, and did put all things

things under his feet, did give him power over all flesh, did commit unto him all authority in heaven and earth; did exalt him to the highest place of dignity and authority next to himself; at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest; yea did place him upon his own throne and tribunal in his room, so that The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; well may he in that respect be entitled the Son of God; as thereby holding the rank and privilege suitable to such a relation: He being the Chief of the Family, and next in order to the great Pater-familias of heaven and earth. Of him (saith S. Paul) all the family in heaven and earth is named; Moses verily (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house: and, Being made so much better than the Angels (saith the Apostle) as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they (they being only called servants, or ministers; he being entitled a son and heir.)

In these respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly denominated the Son of God with some peculiarity and excellency beyond others: But his being with such emphasis called God's only begotten son, (denoting an exclusion of all others from this relation upon the same kind of ground) doth surely import a more excellent ground thereof, than any of these mentioned. For the first Adam did also immediately receive his being from the power and inspiration of God (God formed his body and breathed a soul into it) Isaac, Samuel and John the Baptist had also a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being born of Parents mortified by age, and unapt for generation, by interposition of the divine power (so it is expressly said of Sarah, *ὡς ἔστιν ἡ ἡμετέρα γεννηθήναι αὐτῇ ἐκ θεοῦ*, she received power from God for conception of seed) which productions do not so greatly differ from the production of Christ as man.

And how can we conceive that the production of Angels should be so much inferior to our Saviour's temporal generation, if there were no other but that?

And although our Saviour was the first and chief, yet was he not the only Son of the resurrection; There were (as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith) many sons of this kind brought to glory; and Christ was first born among many brethren; this is also a ground not proper or perspicuous enough for such a denomination; and indeed before it came to pass, he was called God's son; he was so when he lived, he was so when God so loved the world, that he gave him for its salvation.

Neither doth the free collation of power and dignity how eminent soever well suffice to ground this singularity of relation; for we see others also in regard to their designation and deputation to offices of power and dignity, although indeed subordinate and inferior to those he received, to be entitled the sons of God; and however this is rather the foundation of a metaphorical, than of a natural and proper sonship, which is too slender and insufficient for him; who in the most solemn and august strain is denominated such.

Likewise although our Saviour be the heir of all things, yet hath he co-heirs, whom God hath (as S. Paul speaketh) together enlivened, and together raised, and together seated with him in thrones of glory and bliss; beside that privileges of this kind are rather consecutive and declarative of this his Relation to God, than formally constitutive thereof: If a son, then an heir, saith S. Paul; inheritance follows sonship, and declares it, rather than properly makes it.

Moreover those prerogatives of singular affection, and favour appropriated to Christ, together with all those glorious preferments consequent on them, do also argue some higher ground of this relation; for how could it be, that merely upon account of that temporal generation (which did only make him a man, of like passions and infirmities to us, sin only excepted) or in respect to any thing consequent thereupon, God should affect him with so special a dearness, and advance him to dignities so superlative, *ὑπερ πάντων ἀρχῶν, καὶ κυρίων, καὶ δυνάμεων, καὶ κρατειῶν*; far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named; Angels, and authorities, and powers being (as S. Peter says) made subject unto him? Such proceedings (that generation only, or any thing resulting from it, being supposed) do not seem consistent with that decent congruity and natural equity, which God is ever wont to observe in his regard to persons and in his ordering of things.

We must therefore search for a more excellent, and more proper ground of this magnificent relation, or peculiar sonship; and such an one we shall find clearly deducible from testimonies of holy Scripture, (and by several steps of discourse we shall deduce it.)

1. It is thence first evident, that our Saviour had in him somewhat more than humane, according to which he is said to have existed before his temporal generation here among men. Even as men after death are in regard to a superviving part of them, their immortal soul, said to be and live; for, even then, saith our Lord, *all men do live to God*. For, before his birth here, he is said to have been in heaven, and to have descended thence: *No man, saith he, hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, which is in heaven*: Even when he visibly lived here, he was (as himself affirms) *secundum aliquid sui*, according to somewhat invisible in him, then actually in heaven; and according to that somewhat he was before in heaven; and by Union of that invisible being to humane visible nature, he is said to have descended from heaven. His ascension into heaven was but a translation of the humane nature thither, where according to a more excellent nature he did abide before the incarnation: for, *What* (saith he again) *if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up, where he was before?* From hence he is declared worthy and capable of so transcendent preferments; for, *He that cometh from above, out of heaven, is above all things*; because, *The second man is the Lord from heaven*. He, as to his manifestation in the flesh, was junior to S. John the Baptist, but in truth was of more ancient standing, and thence was to be preferred before him, as S. John himself perceived, and professed: *He that* (saith S. John) *comes after me is preferred before me, because he was before me*. He did subsist even before Abraham was born, whence without absurdity he could affirm, that *He, and Abraham* had interviews and intercourse together; so he discoursed with the Jews: *Thou art not* (said they) *yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* He replied; *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am*: This saying did seem very absurd to them, and so offended them, that they took up stones to cast at him; not apprehending the mystery couched in his words; and that he had another nature, different from that which appeared to them, according to which that saying of his was verified. Yea farther, he had a subsistence and a glory before the world had a being; for thus he prays: *And now, father, glorify me, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*: *Glory* (that is a most honourable state of being, and excellent perfection) was not only destined to him, but he really had it, and enjoyed it with God, before the world was.

2. Necessary indeed it was, that he should exist before the world, for that, secondly, God by him made the world, and for that he made the world himself: *Eph. 3. 9. God* (saith Saint Paul) *created all things by Jesus Christ*; and, *By him* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *God made the worlds* (or the Ages) *τὰ αἰῶνες*, that is, all things which ever at any time did subsist; those very ages, which the same Apostle saith *we believe to have been framed by the word of God*. By him (saith S. John in the beginning of his Gospel) *were all things made, and without him was nothing made, that was made*; *δι' αὐτοῦ*, that is, *by him*, not *δι' αὐτόν*, for him only; to exclude that ungrammatical misinterpretation Saint Paul joineth both these notions together: *τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ δι' αὐτόν ἐκτίσθη*, *All things* (saith he) *were made by him, and for him*; as also to prevent any restriction, or exception of matters created by him, he particularly reckoneth what things were made by him; *By him* (saith S. Paul) *were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth*; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, *all things were created by him, and for him*: He was not only (as some heterodox Interpreters would expound it) to create a new moral, and figurative world; he should not only restore and reform mankind, but he of old did truly and properly give being to all things; and among those things, he even created Angels, *all things in heaven*; beings unto which that metaphorical creation of men here doth not extend, or any-wise appertain: he therefore consequently, as S. Paul subjoins, *καὶ αὐτὸν πρῶτον, doth exist before all things*; as the cause must necessarily in nature precede the effect.

3. He did indeed (to ascend yet higher, even to the top) exist from all eternity: for he is called absolutely *ἀρχή*, the beginning, which excludes all time previous to his existence; he is stiled *πρῶτον γεννητός*, the first born of every creature, (or rather born before all the creation, as *πρῶτος μὲν τῶν* signifies, *he was before me*, in S. John.) He is the Word, which was in the beginning, that is, before any time conceivable, and consequently from eternity. He is called the eternal life:

H h

The

- 1 John 1. 2. *The life* (saith S. John in the first Epistle; his life that is another name, frequently
 John 1. 4. attributed to Christ, especially by that Apostle; *the life*) was manifested, and we
 11. 25. 14. 6. did see it; and we bear witness, and shew that eternal life, which was with the Fa-
 1 John 1. 2. 5. ther (ὁ λόγος ὡς αὐτὸς ἐξ ἡμῶν, the Word was with God; and, ὁ ὢν ὡς αὐτὸς ἐξ ἡμῶν, the
 11. 5. 12. 5. 20. Life was with the Father, are, as I conceive, the same thing;) and more explicite-
 1 John 5. 20. ly in the same Epistle: We are (saith S. John) in him that is true, in his Son Jesus
 Christ; he is the true God, and the eternal life. Hence is he frequently in the Apo-
 Apoc. 1. 11, calypse stiled, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega;
 17. 2. 8. 21. 6. He that was, and is, and is to come; which phrases do commonly express the eter-
 22. 13. nity and immortality proper to God; as in that of Isay: Thus saith the Lord,
 11a. 44. 6. the King of Israel; and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts; I am the first, and I am
 41. 4. 48. 12. the last, and beside me there is no God. The same is signified by that elogy of the
 Heb. 13. 8. Apostle to the Hebrews: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; (that
 is, who is eternally immutable) that Apostle also implies the same, when he saith,
 Heb. 7. 13. ἀρχὴν, καὶ τέλος οὐκ ἔχει, neither beginning of days, nor end of life; Melchisedek in a
 typical or mystical way, our Lord in a real and proper sense was such; beginning-
 less and endless in his existence. And the Prophet Micah seems to have taught
 Micah 5. 2. the same, saying of him (of him that should come out of Bethlehem, to be Ruler
 in Israel) that his goings forth have been from old, even from everlasting (or, from
 the days of eternity.) His eternity is however necessarily deducible from that,
 which is by S. John, S. Paul, and the Apostle to the Hebrews so plainly affirmed of
 him, that he made the Worlds, that he made the Ages, that he made all things;
 for if he made the World, he was before the foundations of the World, which
 phrase denotes eternity; if he made the Ages, he must be before all Ages; if all
 things were made by him, and nothing can make it self, then necessarily he was
 unmade; and being unmade, he necessarily must be eternal; for what at any time
 did not exist, can never without being made come to exist. His eternity also may
 be strongly inferred from his being called the Word, the Wisdom, and the Power
 of God; for if he were not eternal, ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ὅτι καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ λόγος, there was a
 1 Cor. 1. 24. time when God wanted these; when he was without mental speech, or understand-
 In decret. ing; when he was not wise, when he was not powerful; as S. Athanasius argues.
 Conc. Nic. It therefore doth with sufficient evidence appear from Scripture, that our Saviour
 page 276. had a being before his temporal birth, and that before all creatures, yea even from
 eternity. Farthermore,
 4. From what hath been said, it follows, that his being was absolutely Divine.
 If he was no creature, if author of all creatures, if eternally subsistent, then as-
 suredly he is God; that state, that action, that property are incommunicably pec-
 culiar unto God. Only God is ὁ αὐτός, being of himself originally, and independant-
 Heb. 3. 4. ly; only God is the Creator of all things (He that made all things is God, saith
 1 Tim. 6. 16. the Apostle to the Hebrews) Only God hath immortality (or eternity) saith S. Paul;
 Rom. 16. 26. No epithet or attribute is more proper to God, than that αἰὼν ὁ αὐτός, God eternal.
 Hence is our Lord said by S. Paul before he did assume the form of a servant,
 Phil. 2. 6, 7. and became like unto men, to have subsisted in the form of God, not deeming it
 * τὸ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ὅμοιον ὡς ὁ θεός, robbery * to be equal to God (or to have a subsistence in duration and perfection
 τῷ θεῷ equal to God) so that as he was after his incarnation truly man, partaker of hu-
 mane nature, affections and properties, so before it, he was truly God, partaking
 of the Divine essence and attributes. Thence is he often in the Scriptures abso-
 lutely and directly named God; God in the most proper, and most high sense:
 John 1. 1. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God,
 saith S. John in the beginning of his Gospel (the place where he is most likely to
 speak with the least ambiguity, or darkness) the same word, which was in time
 made flesh, and dwelt among us, did before all time exist with God, and was God.
 1 Tim. 3. 16. God (saith S. Paul) was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels,
 preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed up into glory. Of
 which propositions, 'tis evident, that Christ is the subject, and by consequence
 Acts 20. 2. he is there named God. God is also by S. Paul said to have purchased the Church
 with his own blood; who did that, but he that also was man, even the man Christ
 Jesus? S. Thomas upon his conviction of our Saviour's resurrection did express
 John 20. 28. his faith upon him, by crying out, My Lord, and my God; which acknowledg-
 ment our Saviour accepted and approved as a proper testimony of that faith. (He
 permits

permits him to say it, or rather he accepts it, not hindring him, saith S. Athanasius.) S. Paul calls the coming of our Lord at the resurrection, the appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. To the Son (as the Apostle to the Hebrews interpreteth it) it was said in the Psalm (Psalm. 45. 7.) *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre.* We are (saith S. John) in the true one, in his son Jesus Christ, this he (ἐστὶν) is the true God, and life eternal; no false, no metaphorical, no temporary God, but the very true God, the supreme eternal God. Out of whom (saith S. Paul, recounting the privileges of the Jewish nation) as concerning the flesh (or according to his humanity) Christ came who is over all, God blessed for ever; ὁ θεὸς πάντων θεός, the God over all; the sovereign God and Lord of all things; the most high; God blessed for ever; the ἰσχυρὸς, which is a characteristical title, or special attribute of God in the stile of the Scriptures, and according to the common use of the Jews. Yea even of old, *Isaiah* foretold of the Child which should be born, of the Son which should be given to us, that his name should be called (that is according to the Hebrew manner of speaking, that he should really be; or however that he truly should be called) the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

In these places more clearly and immediately, in many other places obliquely, and according to fair consequence; in many more probably, our Saviour is called God, God absolutely without any interpretative restriction or diminution. And seeing the Holy Scripture is so careful of yielding occasion to conceive more Gods than one, seeing it is so strict in exacting the belief, worship and obedience of one only God, absolutely such; may we not well infer with S. Irenaeus; Now, (saith he, speaking indeed concerning the God of the Old Testament, whom the Gnosticks did not acknowledge to be the highest and best God, but in words, applicable to the God of the New Testament, whom we adore :) Now (saith he) neither the Lord, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the Apostles, would ever have called any one definitively, nor absolutely God, unless he were truly God: and, Never (saith he again) did the Prophets, or the Apostles, name any other God, or call Lord, beside the true and only God.

That he is truly God, we might also from other appellations peculiar to God; from divinest attributes, and divinest operations ascribed to him; from the worship and honour we are allowed and enjoined to yield him, farther shew; but these things (in compliance with the time and your patience) I shall omit.

Other appellations also peculiar unto the supreme God are assigned to him, as that most appropriate and incommunicable name *Jehovah*: (of which in the Prophet *Isay* God himself says thus,) *I am the Lord, and there is none else*: and *Moses*; *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah*: even this is attributed to him; for *This* (saith *Jeremy*) is his name, whereby he shall be called, *Jehovah our righteousness*; and of S. John the Baptist it was by *Malachy* foretold, that he should prepare the way of *Jehovah*. The name Lord (answering to *Jehovah*) is both absolutely, and with most excellent adjuncts commonly given him: The second man, saith S. Paul, is the Lord from heaven; The Lord of all things he is called by the same Apostle; and, the one, or only Lord. To us (saith he) there is one Lord, by whom are all things. And, The Lord of glory, or most glorious Lord; (If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;) And, The Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, he is called in S. John's Revelation, (They shall, saith he, war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings :) We are also by precept enjoined, and by exemplary practice authorized to render unto our Saviour that honour and worship, which are proper and due to the only supreme God; for, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, is the great law of true Religion: * 'Tis only belonging to God (as S. Athanasius speaks) to be worshipped; a creature must not worship a creature, but a servant his Lord, and a creature its God. And, † They who call a creature Lord, and worship him as a creature, how (saith he) do

Συγχωρεῖ λέγειν, ὅτι μὴ ἀλλὰ ἑαυτῷ, καὶ καλεῖται αὐτόν. Athan. Orat. 3. contra Ari. p. 394.

Tit. 2. 13. Heb. 2. 8.

John 5. 20.

Utroque Dei appellatione significavit Spiritum & eum qui ungitur Filium, & eum qui ungit, id est Patrem, Iren. 3. 6. Rom. 9. 5.

Apoc. 5. 13. πᾶν κτίσμα (where by the way seeing all creatures worship him, he is excluded from being a Creature.)

Mat. 14. 61. Rom. 1. 25. 2 Cor. 11. 31.

Isa. 9. 6.

John 3. 16.

Gal. 1. 1, 12.

Jude 4.

Isa. 35. 4.

Neque igitur Dominus, neque Spiritus Sanctus, neque Apostoli eum, qui non esset Deus, definitivè & absolutè Deum nominassent, nisi esset verus Deus. Iren. 3. 6. Nunquam Prophetæ, neque Apostoli ali- um Deum nominaverunt, vel Dominum appellaverunt, præter verum, & solum Deum. Idem lib. 3. cap. 8.

Isa. 45. 6, 18.

Deut. 6. 4.

Jer. 23. 6.

Mal. 3. 1.

Mat. 3. 3.

1 Cor. 15. 47.

Acts 10. 36.

1 Cor. 8. 6.

1 Cor. 2. 8.

Psalm. 24. 9.

Jude 4.

Apoc. 17. 14.

19. 16.

Matt. 4. 10.

* Οὐδὲν γὰρ τὸ θεογονεῖν κτίσμα· πῶς κτίσμα ἢ θεογονεῖ, ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς πᾶσι, καὶ κτίσμα θεῶν. Athan. in Ari. Orat. 3. p. 394.

† Οὐδὲν γὰρ κτίσμα λέγοντες εἶναι τὸ καλεῖν, καὶ ὡς κτίσμα λατρεύοντες αὐτὸ, τὸ διακρίνειν ἡλλήλων. Ath. Or. 1. in Ari. p. 296.

- Heb. 1. 6. they differ from the heathen? But of him it is said, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*; of him myriads of Angels say, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*: Yea all creatures in heaven and earth, and under the earth resound the same acclamation, saying; *To him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the worship, and the praise for ever. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood — to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Hence the throne of God, the Father, and of his Son are one and the same; *The throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it*, saith S. John, speaking of the heavenly city; *For the Son (saith that great Father) reigning with the same royalty of his Father, is seated upon the same throne with his Father.* To invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is a practice characterizing and distinguishing Christians from Infidels; as when S. Paul inscribes his Epistle to the Church of Corinth, *Together with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place*; and when Saul is said to have authority from the chief Priests to bind all that called upon his name, so that we need not to alledge the single example of S. Stephen invoking our Lord. Indeed himself informs us, that *The Father had committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.* To wish and pray for grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ is the usual practice of the Apostles, and to dispense them is a prerogative of his common to him with God his Father. To have the same Holy Spirit as the Father unmeasurably, and to send it from himself, with commissions and instructions, and to communicate it freely, are especial characters of Supreme Divinity, and much transcending any Creature; as S. Athanasius observes: *With authority (said he) to give the spirit doth not sate a creature, or a thing made, but is an endowment of God.* Whereas also we are often severely prohibited from relying or confiding upon any man, or any creature (as in that of the Prophet: *Cursed be the man, that trusteth in man, and maketh his flesh his arm*) we are yet allowed, yea we are obliged to repose our trust and confidence in Christ; *Yea trust in God* (saith he himself to his Disciples) *trust also in me*; whence S. Paul calleth him emphatically, *our hope*; in his compellation to Timothy: *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope*; which is the same title, that Jeremy attributes unto God; *O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof, in time of trouble.* Hence to him jointly with God the Father, and the divine Spirit that solemn benediction or prayer is directed; *The grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all*; as also a parity of highest adoration is then together with the same divine Persons yielded to him, when we are baptized in his name, and consecrated to his service.

- The divinest attributes of God are also in the most absolute manner, and perfect degree assigned to him; Eternity, as we discoursed before. Imminity of presence and power, then implied, when speaking with the Jews he told them that he was then in heaven; and when he promises his Disciples, that *he will be with them, whenever they meet in his name*; and also, that *he will be with them to the end of the world.* Infinite wisdom and knowledge; for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and, *Now are we sure (say the Disciples to him in S. John) that thou knowest all things*: and, *Lord, (saith S. Peter) thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*: and S. Paul calls him *the wisdom of God, and the power of God*; wherefore since God's wisdom is omniscient, and his power omnipotent, so consequently is he. In short, whatever attribute or perfection God hath, the same hath he: for, *All things, saith he, that the father hath, are mine*, what creature without high presumption could say those words concerning the divine Spirit: *He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

- The divine attributes he expresseth by divine operations and works, which are ascribed to him. It is a most divine work to create, this we shewed before to have been performed by him: To sustain, and conserve things in being is another like work; this he doth, *For he (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) upholdeth all things by the word of his power*; and, *By him, saith S. Paul, all things consist.* To perform miracles, or do things surmounting the laws, and thwarting the course of nature;

nature; such as by mere word and will rebuking winds and seas, curing diseases, ejecting Devils is the property of him, who (as the Psalmist says) *alone doeth great wonders*. Particularly to raise the dead, is a prerogative reserved by God in his own hand (for, *The Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up*) This our Lord often did, at his pleasure: for, *As the father raiseth up the dead, and quickneth them; even so the son quickneth whom he will*; and of himself he saith in the *Apocalypse*: *I have the keys of hell and of death*. Especially to raise himself, which he assumeth to himself; (*I, saith he, lay down my life, that I may take it up again; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again*: and, *Demolish this temple* (saith he again) *and in three days I will rear it*; which it was impossible for him to do, and unintelligible how it should be done otherwise, than by the divinity resident in him. To be searching mens hearts and discerning their secret thoughts is a peculiar work of him, that saith, *I the Lord try the heart, I search the reins*; and of our Lord it is said, *He needed not, that any should witness about a man, for he knew what was in man*; and by many experiments he declared this power. To foresee and foretell future contingencies to be peculiar to himself God signified when in the Prophet he thus challenged the objects of heathen worship: *Shew the things to come, that we may know ye are Gods*; this our Lord did upon several occasions, particularly in the case of Judas his treason: *He knew* (saith S. John) *from the beginning, who they were, who did not believe, and who it was that should betray him*. This, I say, he did, not as the Prophets by particular arbitrary revelation, but immediately by his own Spirit; whereby even the Prophets themselves were illustrated and inspired; for it was (as S. Peter says) *The Spirit of Christ in them which testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow*. To see and know God (who inhabits inaccessible light) is beyond a creatures capacity and state; and yet belongs to him. None (saith he) *bath seen the father, save he which is of God; he hath seen the father*: and, *None knoweth the father, but the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him*. To remit sins absolutely he denied not to be the property of God, when his adversaries thus objected it: *Who can forgive sins, except God only?* yet he assumed it to himself, and asserted it by a miracle. To save also God declared to be a peculiar work of his, when he said it, and reiterated it in *Ezay*, and in *Hosea*; *I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour*; which act yet, and which title are no less proper to our Lord. In fine, briefly, he claims to himself at once the performance of every divine work, when he saith, *Whatsoever the father doeth, that also doth the son likewise*.

Now all this state and majesty, all these glorious titles, attributes and works, can we imagine that he whose name is *jealous* (as it is in *Exodus* 34. 14.) and who is *jealous of his name* (as it is in *Ezekiel* 39. 25.) who said it once and again in the Prophet *Ezay*, that he will not give his glory to another; can we conceive, I say, that he should communicate them, or should suffer them to be ascribed to any mere creature, how eminent soever in nature or worth, how dear soever upon any regard? for indeed the highest creature producible must be infinitely distant from him, infinitely inferior to him, infinitely base and mean in comparison to him, as to any true perfection or dignity; nor therefore can any creature be in nature capable of such names, such characters, such prerogatives; nor can in any reason or justice accept or bear them. Our Saviour therefore, unto whom by divine allowance and injunction they are attributed, who willingly admits them, who clearly assumes them to himself, is truly God.

5. Now the whole tenour of our Religion (according to dictates of Scripture most frequent and obvious) asserting the Unity of God; our Saviour therefore, being God, must of necessity partake the same individual essence with God his Father; and it must be certainly true, which he affirmeth concerning himself: *I and the father are one* (in *greek*, are the same thing, or one in nature; not in person, or manner of subsistence) and what he again saith; *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*; and, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me*; by the divine essence common to both.

Yet hath he not this essence from himself, but by communication; for, *As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given the son to have life in himself*. And *He that is or hath his essence from God, is the periphrasis he gives of himself*. He is not first in order, as an original, but is the *Image of the invisible God*.

Pl. 72. 18. 86.

8, 10. 136. 4.

1 Sam. 2. 6.

Deut. 32. 39.

Apoc. 1. 18.

Joh. 10. 17, 18

John 2. 19

Jer. 7. 10.

John 2. 25.

Esa. 41. 23.

John 6. 64.

1 Pet. 1. 11.

1 Tim. 6. 16.

John 6. 46.

Matt. 11. 27.

Mark 2. 7.

Isa. 43. 25.

Isa. 43. 11.

Hos. 13. 4.

John 5. 19.

Deut. 6. 15.

Isa. 42. 8.

48. 11.

Ous de i-

talamon de-

lous on y-

ous pollon,

eis en to kōn-

on triadē

en to pōte.

Chryl. in

Joh. 1. 18.

Joh. 10. 30.

1 Joh. 5. 7.

Joh. 14. 9.

Apoc. 21. 22.

The Lord God

Almighty is its

temple and the

Lamb.

John 5. 26.

6. 46.

Col. 1. 15.

2 Cor. 4. 4.

John 14. 9.

God Heb. 1. 3.

God (an image indeed most adequate and perfectly like, as having the very same nature and essence. He is *ἀπαύλασμα τῆς δόξης* (the effulgency of his Father's glory) and *χαρακτὴρ τῆς οὐσίας*, the character, or exact impression of his substance. He is the internal word; or mind of God, which resembles him, and yet is not different from him: He is the life, the wisdom, the power of God, which terms denote the most intrinsic and perfect unity. So the Apostles by the most apposite comparisons that nature affords, strive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour; the which is that generation, whereupon the relation, about which we speak, is founded; or, because of which, our Lord is most truly and properly called *The only begotten Son of God*. For, if to produce a like in any kind or degree, be to generate; then to give a being without any dissimilitude or disparity is the most proper generation: our Saviour therefore hence truly is the Son of God the Father. And that he is so only, that no other beside him hath been ever thus begotten, is evident; for that as no reason of ours could have informed us, that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath shewed us that any other hath been; and we therefore cannot without extreme temerity suppose it. We are sufficiently instructed that all other divine productions together with the relations grounded on them are different from this; by creation things receive a Being from God infinitely distant from, infinitely unequal and unlike to the divine essence; and that *filiation*, or sonship which doth stand upon adoption and grace is wholly in kind different from this. And the communication of the divine essence jointly from the Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, doth in manner (although the manner thereof be wholly incomprehensible to us) so differ from this, that in the Holy Scripture (the only guide of our conception, and of our speech in matters of this nature far surpassing our reason) is never called generation; and therefore we must not presume to think, or call it so.

But let so much suffice for explication of the Point; a Point represented in Scripture so considerable, that the belief thereof (if it have that sincerity, and that strength, as to dispose our hearts to a due love and reverence of the Son of God, attended with, or attested to by a faithful obedience to his laws) doth raise us also to the privilege of becoming the Sons of God, and doth mystically unite us to him, and elevateth us above the world; so doth S. John teach us: *To as many (saith he) as received him (received him as the Son of God, or believed him to be so) to them gave he the power (or the privilege) to become the sons of God.* And, *Whoever (saith he) shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* And, *Who (saith he again) is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* of so great importance is the Point. Of which I shall only now farther briefly propose some practical applications.

1. We may hence learn whence the performances and the sufferings of Christ become of so high worth, and so great efficacy. *Wonder not (saith S. Cyril the Catechist) if the whole World was redeemed; for it was not a bare man, but the only Son of God that died for it.* It is not so strange, that God's only Son his mediation, should be so acceptable and so effectual with God; that the blood of God's dearest Son should be so precious in God's sight, that the intercession of one so near him should be so prevalent with him. What could God refuse to the Son of his love earnestly soliciting and suing in our behalf? What debts might not so rich a price discharge? What anger could not so noble a sacrifice appease? What justice could not so full a dispensation satisfy? *We were not (S. Peter telleth us) redeemed with corruptible things, with silver or gold (no; whole Indies of such stuff would not have been sufficient to ransom one soul) but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.* It was not (as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarketh) by the blood of goats and heifers, that our sins were expiated (no; whole hecatombs would have nothing availed to that purpose) but by the blood of Christ who by the eternal spirit offered up himself spotless unto God, (who as the eternal Son of God did offer himself a sacrifice not to be blamed or refused) *It is (as S. John saith) the blood of Christ, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all sin.* And well indeed might a Person so infinitely noble, worthy and excellent be a sufficient ransom for whole worlds of miserable offenders, and captives. Well might his voluntary undergoing such inconveniences and infirmities of life, his suffering so disgraceful and painful a death countervail the deserved

Ὁ ὅς ἡμεῖς
συμμορφώμε-
νοι τῇ χάριτι,
τῷ δὲ αὐτοῦ,
μετὰ τῷ ὁ
ἡμεῖς ἀνα-
βαίνομεν δόξ-
αν. Cyril. Al.

John 1. 12.
1 John 4. 15.

1 John 5. 5.
Μὴ θαυμά-
ζετε οὐδὲν ὅτι
ἔλεγε ἡμεῖς
ὅτι ἡμεῖς
ἐκ τῆς ὁ-
δοῦ τοῦ
ἡμεῖς ἀλλ' οὐ-
δε, διὰ μόνον
τοῦ ὅτι
αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς
ἐκ. Cyril.
Catech. 13.

1 Peter 1. 18.
19.
Psalm 49. 7.

Heb. 9. 12,
13. 14. 10.
4. 8. 10.

1 John 1. 7.

ed punishment of all mankind; well might his so humble, so free, so perfect submission to God's will infinitely please God, and render him propitious to us. Well might (as S. Athanasius speaks) the very appearing of such a Saviour in the flesh ^{ἡ ἑνσαρκίᾳ τοῦ} be a general ransom of sin, and become salvation to every creature; the which S. Paul ^{παρεδόκα τὸ} thus expresseth: God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, ^{ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν} condemned sin in the flesh; for if our displeasing, injuring and dishonouring him, ^{καὶ κτίσας} who is so great and so good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and ^{πλάσας ὁμοῖον} dignity of the Person, submitting in our behalf to the performance of all due ^{ἐκείνου γένους} obedience, and all proper satisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation offered, and compensate the wrong done to God. Well therefore may we believe, and say with comfort, after the Apostle: *Τίς ὑπεράσιν ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀργισμοῦ;* Who shall ^{Rom. 8. 33.} criminate against the elect of God? it is God that justifieth (it is the Son of God, it is God himself, who satisfies divine justice for us) who is there that condemns? it is Christ that died.

2. We may hence be informed, what reverence and adoration is due from us to our Saviour, and why we must honour the Son, even as we honour the Father, ^{John 5. 23.} why even all the Angels must worship him; why every thing in heaven, and earth, ^{Heb. 1. 6.} and beneath the earth must bend the knee (that is, must yield veneration and observation) to him; why by all creatures whatever the same preeminence is to be ascribed, and the same adoration paid jointly and equally to God the Father Almighty, who ^{Apoc. 5. 13.} sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb his blessed Son, who standeth at his right hand. Such divine glory and worship we are obliged to yield him because he is the Son of God, one in essence, and therefore equal in Majesty, with his Father: were it not so, it would be injury to God, and sacrilege to do it; God would not impart his glory, we should not attribute it unto another. So this consideration grounds our duty, and justifies our practice of worshipping our Lord; it also encourages us to perform it with faith and hope; for thence we may be assured, that he being the Son of God omniscient doth hear and mind us; being the Son of God omnipotent, he can thoroughly help and save us; being also as such absolutely and immensely good, he will be always disposed to afford what is good and convenient for us in our need.

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God toward us, and our ^{Tit. 3. 4.} correspondent obligation to love and thankfulness toward him. In this (saith S. ^{Eph. 2. 4.} John) was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten ^{John 4. 9.} Son into the World, that we might live through him: In this (adds he) is love (love ^{10.} indeed, love admirable, and inconceivable) not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten son to be a propitiation for our sins. Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, as for a Prince, himself glorious and happy, most freely to deliver up, out from his own bosom, his own only most dearly beloved Son, to the suffering most base contumelies, and most grievous pains for the welfare of his enemies of rebels and traitors to him? Even such hath been God's goodness to us: The Son of God, the heir of eternal Majesty, was by his Father sent down from heaven (from the bosom of his glory and bliss) to put on the form of a servant, to endure the inconveniences of this mortal state, to undergo the greatest indignities and sorrows; that we, who were alienated, and enemies in our mind by wicked works, ^{Col. 1. 21.} might be reconciled to God; might be freed from wrath and misery; might be capable of everlasting life and salvation: suitable to such unexpressible goodness ought our gratitude to be toward God: what affectionate sense in our hearts, what thankful acknowledgments with our mouths, what dutiful observance in all our actions doth so wonderful an instance of mercy and goodness deserve and require from us.

4. This consideration may fitly serve to beget in us hope and confidence in God upon any occasions, of need or distress, to support and comfort us in all our afflictions: for, He that so loved us, that he gave his only begotten son for our ^{John 3. 16.} salvation and happiness; how can we ever suspect him as unwilling to bestow on us whatever else shall to his wisdom appear needful or convenient for us? He that out of pure charity and pity toward us did part with a jewel so inestimable, how can any thing seem much for him to give us: it is the consolatory discourse of S. Paul: He (saith the Apostle) that did not spare his own son, but delivered him up for us ^{Rom. 8. 32.} all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things? all things that we truly need,

need, all things that we can reasonably desire, all things which are good and fit for us.

5. S. *John* applieth this consideration to the begetting charity in us toward our brethren. *Beloved* (saith he) *if God so loved us* (as to send his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him) *we ought also to love one another*. If God so lovingly gave up his only Son for our sakes; what in grateful regard to him (in observant imitation of him) what expressions, I say, of charity and good will ought we to yield toward our brethren? what endeavours, what goods, what life of ours should seem too dear unto us for to expend or impart for their good? shall we be unwilling to take any pains, or suffer any loss for them, for whom (together with our selves) the Son of God hath undergone so much trouble, so much disgrace, so much hardship? shall we, I say, be uncharitable when the Son of God hath laid upon us such an obligation, hath set before us such an example?

6. This consideration also may inform us, and should mind us concerning the dignity of our nature and of our condition; and consequently how in respect to them we should behave our selves. If God did so much consider and value man, as for his benefit to debase his only Son; if the Son of God himself hath deigned to assume our nature, and to advance it into a conjunction with the divine nature, then is man surely no inconsiderable or contemptible thing; then should we despise no man, whom God hath so regarded and so honoured; then ought we not to neglect or slight our selves: if we were worthy of God's so great care, we ought not to seem unworthy of our own. We ought to value our selves, not so indeed as to be proud of so undeserved honour, but so as to be sensible thereof, and to sute our demeanour thereto. Reflecting upon these things should make us to disdain to do any thing unworthy that high regard of God, and that honourable alliance unto him. It should breed in us noble thoughts, worthy desires, and all excellent dispositions of soul conformable to such relations; it should engage us unto a constant practice, befitting them, whom God hath so dignified, whom the Son of God hath vouchsafed to make his brethren: by affecting any thing mean or sordid, by doing any thing base or wicked, we greatly undervalue our selves, we must disparage that glorious Family; into which by the Son of God his incarnation we are inserted. *Ταῦτ' ἐν τῇ μὲν ἀξίᾳ τῷ φιλοσοφῶντι ἀνδραγαθία, καὶ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρῃ κατὰ τὴν γλῶσσαν. Let us therefore* (saith S. Chrys.) *show a Philosophy worthy of this honour; having nothing common with this earth.* (in Joh. 1. Hom. 18.)

7. This consideration doth much aggravate all impiety and sin. Wilful sin upon this account appeareth not only disobedience to our Creator and natural Lord, but enormous offence against the infinite bounty, and mercy, and condescension of our Saviour; a most heinous abusing the Son of God, who came down into this homely and humble state on purpose to bless us in turning every one of us from our iniquities; to free us from the grievous dominion, and from the woful effects of sin; we thereby frustrate the most gracious intentions of God, and defeat the most admirable project that could be for our benefit and salvation: We thereby trample upon the Son of God, recrucify him, and put him to open shame: so the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us, implying the heinous guilt, and sad consequence of doing so: *He* (saith the Apostle) *that despised Moses his law died without mercy;— Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?*

8. Lastly, This consideration may serve to beget in us a high esteem of the dispensation Evangelical, and hearty submission thereto. Almighty God (as is signified in the Parable) after several provisions for the good of mankind, and several messages from heaven to the world here, did at last send his Son, with this expectation: *Surely they will reverence my Son*: And surely much reason he had to expect the greatest reverence to be yielded to his Person; the readiest credence, and obedience to his word. For if any declaration of God concerning his will, or our duty, however proceeding from him (either by dictate of natural reason, or by the instruction of Prophets, or by the ministry of Angels) ought to be entertained with great respect and observance; much more should the overtures of greatest mercy and favour exhibited by his own Son (on purpose sent unto us to discover them) be embraced with highest regard, and humblest reverence, and most hearty compliance. 'Tis the Apostle to the Hebrews his discourse, and inference:

rence : Therefore (saith he, therefore, because God hath in these last times spoken ^{Heb. 1. 2.} unto us by his Son) we ought ^{21 1, 3:} *δεδοσμένοις περισσότερον* to give more (abundant, or more) earnest heed to the things which we have heard ; for (subjoins he) How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ; which at first began to be spoken by (our) Lord ; and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. *Ταύτ' ἐν ἀναστάσει ἐπίφοιτος, ὁ ἀποστόλος ἑδωκεν ἐνυδατοῦμεν ἡμῶν ὃ βίον, ὃ δαπάναν ποιήσωμεν.* Continually therefore revolving and recounting these things, let us cleanse our life, and make it bright : So we conclude with good S. Chrysostome.

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him ; grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, ^{Vid: Chryl. Tom. 6. pag. 623, &c.} may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Our Lord.

S E R M O N XXII.

EPH. IV. 5.

One Lord.



S the name of God (truly common to all three Persons of the ^{Luke 2. 11.} Blessed Trinity) is (not in way of exclusion, but) according to ^{Or. 8. Xer. 1} a mysterious peculiarity (*κατ' οἰκονομίαν*, in way of dispensation ^{586, Kler.} accommodated to our instruction, as the Greek Fathers express it) attributed to God the Father, who is the fountain of the Deity, and first in order among the divine Persons ; so likewise is the Name Lord, truly common to the other persons, peculiarly (though also not exclusively) ascribed and appropriated unto God the Son ; who therefore in the stile of the New Testament, which more fully have revealed him, is called sometimes absolutely Lord, sometimes the Lord Jesus, sometimes our Lord ; to acknowledge and call him so being the especial duty, and the distinctive mark or character of a Christian : for, to us, as there is one God and Father of all, and one Holy Spirit, so there is (as S. Paul here in my Text doth say) One Lord. And otherwhere : There be (saith he, there be according to popular estimation, ^{1 Cor. 8. 6.} and worldly use) Gods many, and Lords many, but to us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ. Hence to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, (that is, by confession and practice to acknowledge him our Lord) gives a periphrasis, or description of a Christian (*To the Church of God that is in Co-* ^{1 Cor. 1. 2.} *rinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, together with all that call upon* ^{Acts 9. 14.} *the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place ; that is, together with all Christians every where, so doth S. Paul inscribe his first Epistle to the Corinthians*) whence, No man (saith he in the same Epistle) can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy ^{1 Cor. 12. 3.} Ghost ; that is, no man can heartily embrace Christianity without the gracious assistance of God's Holy Spirit. The reason of which Appellation, being so peculiarly attributed unto Christ, may be, for that beside the natural right unto dominion over us, necessarily appertaining to him as our God, who hath made us, and doth preserve us, there are divers other respects and grounds supervenient, and accruing to him from what he hath undertaken, performed and undergone for us, in spontaneous obedience to the will of God his Father, upon which also

the Title of *Lord* is due unto him : the which to declare first, then to apply them unto our practice shall be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

In whatsoever notion we take the word *Lord* ; either as a *Prince* over Subjects, or as a *Master* over Servants, or as an *Owner* of goods, or as a *Preceptor*, and President over Disciples, or as a *Leader* and Captain to followers ; or as a person singularly eminent above inferiours ; he is according to all such notions truly *Our Lord*.

According to whatever capacity we distinctly or abstractively consider him, either as the *Son of God*, or as the *Son of Man* ; or as *divinorum*, (jointly *God and Man*, united in one Person) as *Jesus* our Saviour, as *the Christ of God*, he is *our Lord*.

If we examine all imaginable foundations of just dominion, eminence in nature the power, the collation of being, or preservation thereof ; donation, conquest, purchase, merit, voluntary compact, upon all these he hath a right of *Lordship* over us duly grounded.

I. He is, I say, first *our Lord* according to every notion, and acception of the word *Lord*.

He is our *Prince* and Governour, we are his subjects and vassals : for, to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*. Of him it was prophesied ; that *the government should be upon his shoulder*, and that *of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end* : He is *the King of Israel*, or of the Church, who, as the Angel told the Blessed Virgin, *shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever*. God hath given him *head over all things to the Church*. So is he a Prince most absolute, endued with sovereign right and power, crowned with glorious Majesty, enjoying all pre-eminences, and exercising all acts futable to Regal dignity, in respect to all things, and particularly in regard to us.

He also is our *Master*, and we are his Servants ; the Church is a house and family, whereof he is the *dominus*, or Householder ; If (saith he) *they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household* (*τῶν οἰκιστῶν αὐτοῦ, famulos ejus*, his domesticks, or menial servants). *All the family in heaven and earth are named of him* (saith S. Paul) that is, the whole Church (both triumphant above in heaven, and militant here on earth) is his family, or called the family of him, as of its Lord. *Christ* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *is as a Son over his house, whose house are we*. He that is called free, is a servant of Christ : and, *We serve the Lord Christ* ; and, *We have a Master in heaven*, saith S. Paul : Blessed (saith our Lord himself) *is that servant, whom his Lord coming shall find so doing* ; that is, whom Christ, our Lord, coming to judgment shall find discharging his duty faithfully. He indeed as a good Master governeth, ordereth and maintaineth his Family well ; furnisheth and feedeth it, with all necessary provisions ; protecteth it from all want, and all mischief ; appointeth to every one therein his due work and service, and payeth to each his due wages and recompence.

He is also our *Owner* ; or the Possessor and Proprietary of us ; *The Lord that bought us*, as S. Peter calls him ; and consequently, who possesseth and enjoyeth us. *We are not our own* (saith S. Paul) *for we were bought with a price* : whence we are become entirely subject to his disposal.

He likewise is our *Preceptor*, or *Teacher* ; or that is, the Lord of our Understanding, which is subject to the belief of his dictates ; and the Lord of our Practice, which is to be directed by his precepts. *Ye* (saith he) *call me Master, and Lord*, (*διδασκαλόν, καὶ κυριον, Doctor and Lord*) *and ye say well, for so I am* : And, *Be ye not called Masters* (*καθηγηται*, guides in doctrine) *for one is your Master, even Christ*. And, *Every thought of ours* (saith S. Paul) *is to be captivated to the obedience of Christ* : Such, as infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious, he necessarily is unto us ; such he is, as sent on purpose by God to enlighten our minds with the knowledge of heavenly truth ; and *to guide our feet into the ways of peace* ; whence we cannot but be obliged to embrace his doctrine, and to observe the rules which he prescribeth us.

He is therefore also our *Captain* and *Leader* ; whose orders we must observe, whose conduct we should follow, whose pattern we are to regard and imitate in all things : He is stiled *αρχηγός ἡμῶν, the Captain of our faith*, *αρχηγός τῆς ζωῆς, the Captain of our life*, *αρχηγός σωτηρίας, the Captain of our salvation*, *αρχιποιμήν, our chief Shepherd*, the

the Apostle, and high Priest of our profession; the Bishop of our Souls. In fine, he Acts 3. 15
(according to what S. Paul says) *is non secundo, hath in all things, the primacy,* 5. 31.
and preeminence; so that according to all notions and senses of *Lordship* he is our 1 Pet. 2. 25.
Lord; but chiefly he is meant such in the principal sense, as having an absolute 5. 4.
right and power to command and govern us. Heb. 3. 1.
Col. 1. 18.

II. *Christ* is also our Lord according to every capacity or respect of nature or office, that we can consider appertaining to him:

I. He is our Lord as by nature the Son of God, partaking of the divine essence and perfections: he as such being endued with eminence superlative, and with power irresistible; as such having created all things, and upholding all things; whence all things necessarily and justly are subject to his order and disposal; all things according to all right and reason are to be governed, possessed and used according to his pleasure. Hence is that most august, and most peculiar name, **JEHOVAH** (denoting either independency, and indefectibility of subsistence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in operation, or both of them together; which therefore is by the Greek Interpreters fitly rendred *υιου*, and after them Lord by our Translators; for the word *υιου* doth signifie to subsist, and *υιου* is used to denote efficacy, ratification, stedfast power or authority) is assigned to him; This is his name whereby he shall be called, **JEHOVAH OUR RIGHT-TEOUSNESS**, saith Jeremy of him: and, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God* (saith God in Hosea concerning the salvation accomplished by him) and in the Prophet Zechary, he thus speaks of himself: *Sing, and rejoyce, O daughter of Sion, for lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know, that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee*: where it is said, that Jehovah, being sent by Jehovah, should come and dwell in the Church, enlarged by accession of the Gentiles; who can that be, but our Lord Christ, who dwelt among us, and was by God his Father sent unto us? And what in the Old Testament is spoken of Jehovah is by infallible Expositors in the New attributed to our Lord: *Sanctifie Jehovah Sabaoth, and he shall be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence*; so did Isaiah speak; and his words are by S. Peter and by S. Paul applied to Christ. *Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be delivered*; so did the Prophet Joel foretell concerning the latter days; and S. Paul accommodates it to the salvation obtained by confessing the name of Christ. In Malachy, Jehovah saith, that he would send his messenger to prepare his way before him; this according to the Evangelists interpretation was verified in S. John the Baptist his preparing the way before our Saviour. Likewise, what Esay said; *The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, prepare the way of Jehovah*, is by all the Evangelists applied to the Baptist, as the voice crying, and to our Saviour, as the Lord coming: Christ therefore is the Lord Jehovah, independent, and immutable in essence, and in power.

The word *Adon* also, which more immediately and properly doth signify dominion (and which put absolutely doth belong to God) is plainly attributed to our Saviour. *The Lord (Jehovah) said to my Lord (le Adoni,)* that is, God the Father to Christ, the Son, yet Lord of David; as our Saviour himself expounds it. And, *The Lord (ha Adon) shall come to his temple*; so in Malachy 'tis prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. According to this notion was it, that S. Thomas, being by our Saviour's resurrection convinced of his divinity, cried out, *My God, and my Lord*: In this sense it was, that S. Peter called our Saviour Lord, when he ascribed omniscience to him, saying, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*. Upon this account, S. John the Baptist said, *He that cometh from above is above all things*, which S. Paul expresseth thus; *The second man is the Lord from heaven*. So is Christ, as he is God, our Lord.

2. He is also our Lord, as Man, by the voluntary appointment and free donation of God his Father; in regard to the excellency of his Person, and to the merit of his performances. God did by gift and delegation confer upon him a supereminent degree of dignity and authority, with power to execute the most Lordly acts of enacting, of dispensing with, and of abrogating laws; of judging, of remitting offences; of dispensing rewards, and of punishing transgressors. The Scripture is copious and emphatical in declaring this Point both in general terms, and with respect to particulars. *Let all the house of Israel* (saith S. Peter) *know assuredly; that God hath made him Lord, and Christ, even this Jesus whom ye did*

John 17. 2. did crucify. And, Thou hast given him power over all flesh : All things are delivered unto me by my Father : All power is given me in heaven and upon earth. The Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand ; saith he concerning himself : and, Being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow — and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus is the Lord : And, God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church : And, We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory, and honour : And, The Lamb which was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blessing : And, When the Son of man sits upon the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. In which places, as in others of the same importance, it is signified generally, that beside the dominion, naturally belonging to our Saviour as God, there hath been conferred on him as man an universal dominion over all things in regard to what as man he did and suffered ; and that in him (as the Apostle to the Hebrews observeth and discourseth) that hath been signally fulfilled, which the Psalmist acknowledgeth, and praiseth God for, in respect to man : Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand, and didst put all things in subjection under his feet. In him also was accomplished the prophetic vision of Daniel : I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man — And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed. It is also particularly expressed of him, that to him as Man is committed a power legislative ; I say unto you, I command you, is the stile he commonly used : and, The Son of man (said he) is Lord of the Sabbath (that is, hath a power to dispense with the observation thereof, or to abrogate the positive law concerning it ; which by parity of reason infers a general power of constituting and rescinding Laws of the like nature.) The prerogative also of remitting sins was given him : That ye may (saith he) know, that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy) arise, take up thy bed and walk : And, The God of our fathers (saith S. Peter) hath raised Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree ; him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince, and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. The administration of justice and judgment he thus also hath : for he is appointed to judge the world, in angels & men, by the man whom he hath ordained : The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son — and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, in angels & men, because, or whereas he is the Son of man : So also for the prerogative of distributing rewards, and inflicting punishments : The Son of man (saith he) shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and reward every man according to his work. Thus by emphatical expression it is signified, that Christ, as man, is our Lord, by God's appointment and donation. We may also consider, that our Saviour as the Son of David, and consequently by a right of succession, according to divine ordination, as King of Israel (to the which all Christians are become Proselytes ; for we are proselytes to him, as he is our Lord, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) is our Lord ; according to that of the Angel to the Blessed Virgin : He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give him the throne of David his Father ; and he shall reign over the house of Israel for ever and ever : Of the increase of his government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David ; and upon his Kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever : So Esay foretold of him ; and many like passages occur in other Prophets. He also considered as *God and man*, united in one Person, is plainly our Lord. For whatever naturally did appertain to God, whatever freely

ly was (in way of gift or reward) communicated to man, doth accrue to the person, and is attributed thereto in consequence of the union *hypostatical*, or personal: It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Christ Jesus* became capable of so high preferments; wherefore most properly upon this consideration is Christ *the Lord of all*, as S. Peter styles him; *having all things (him only excepted, who did subject all things to him) put under his feet.* Acts 10. 36. 1 Cor. 15. 27.

4. If we also consider him as *Jesus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence resulteth a title thereto: Nothing more becomes a Lord, than to protect, and save; none better deserves the right, and the name of a Lord, than a Saviour; wherefore those titles are well conjoined: *I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour*, saith God in *Isay* of himself; and, *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince, and a Saviour to his right hand*, saith S. Peter concerning *Jesus*. Isa. 43. 11. Acts 5. 31.

5. Likewise if he be considered as *the Christ*, that especially implieth him appointed, and consecrated to sovereign dominion, as King of the Church: well therefore did the Angel express his joyful message when he told the shepherds: *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*: and S. Peter well joined them, saying, *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*. Thus in all respects is Christ our Lord. Luke 2. 11. Acts 2. 36.

III. Let us also farther briefly survey the several grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we shall see, that upon all accounts he is our Lord.

1. An uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion; he that is endued therewith, it is necessary that we should submit to him, it is reasonable willingly to admit him for our Lord: Persons so qualified *Aristotle* telleth us have a natural title to dominion; as on the contrary, persons weak (in power or in wisdom) unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things, are naturally subjects and servants. This ground eminently agrees to him, as being by nature the Almighty God, who can do all things, whom nothing can resist; and also for that *all things are given into his hand*, all things are put under his feet. Hence he is most able to protect us; *the gates of hell cannot prevail against his Church; none can snatch us out of his hand; he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God through him.* John 13. 3. Matt. 16. 18. John 10. 28. Heb. 7. 25.

2. To make, to preserve, to provide and dispense maintenance are also clear grounds of dominion; for what can we more justly claim dominion over, than over our own inventions and works; over that which we continually keep and nourish; over that which wholly depends upon us, and subsists merely by our pleasure? Since then *in him we live, and move, and have our being*; since we have derived all our being from him (our being natural as men, and spiritual as Christians) and are by him, *who upholdeth all things*, sustained therein; since as to all our powers, and in all our actions we depend upon him; for *without him we can do nothing*, and *all our sufficiency is of him*; he surely is our Lord, having an absolute right to dispose of us, to order us, and to use us according to his discretion and pleasure. We thence have reason to render that acknowledgment of the *Elders* in the *Revelation* to him: *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory, and the honour, and the power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are, and they were created*; to confess, and celebrate him as our Lord, for that, as it is in the *Psalms*, *It is he that made us, and not we our selves, we are his people and the sheep of his pasture*. * Thus by birth, and privilege of nature, as the Son of God, heir apparent, and consort of eternal Majesty; thus also as concurring with his Father in the divinest actions of creation and providence is *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God, our Lord. Acts 17. 28. Heb. 1. 3. Col. 1. 17. John 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Apoc. 4. 11. Psal. 100. 3.

But beside these natural grounds of dominion over us, there are several others considerable, each of them according to the standing rules of justice and equity, sufficient to found a good title thereto. We (considering our selves as the sons of *Adam*, in that state wherein Christ found us, or wherein we should now be, if

Ο πρῶτος (ὡς ἄρχων) καὶ κλεινὸς τῶν νόμων, καὶ ὁ σῶζων τοὺς ἀρχόντας καὶ τοὺς ἀρχόντας. Plut. in Pelop.

Προσέτι καὶ αὐτὸς τῶν ἀρχόντων καὶ ἐν ὧν ἡγεῖται τὸ κράτος. Clem. Alex. Strom. 7. (pag. 506.)

Τὸ ἀναμάρτητον φῶς τοῦ ἀρχόντος φῶς, καὶ ἀσπρόν φῶς. Arist. Pol. 1. 1, 3, 4.

* Χριστὸς εὐσεβὴς καὶ βασιλεὺς ἀληθὴς ἐστίν, ἐκ ὅτι ἀποκαλεῖται μᾶλλον ἡγεῖται καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ κράτει λαμβάνει τὰ εἶναι καὶ βασιλεὺς, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐστὶν αὐτὸς καὶ τὸ κράτος οὐκ ἐστὶν ποιεῖν καὶ λυτρωσάμενος πάντας γενέσθαι καὶ ὅπως ζήσαντες καὶ νεκροὶ καὶ αὐτοὶ. Ath. Orat. 3. in Ar. pag. 385.

if he had not vouchsafed to come and redeem us) had attempted to withdraw our selves from our due subjection to God by wilful rebellion and disobedience, we thence had forfeited the benefit of God's favourable protection and providence for our good: we had become Outlaws, dead in law; (*dead in trespasses and sins*) we instead of being subjects and servants of God were become (or should have been) *aliens, and enemies to God by wicked works*, according to the natural *blindness of our minds not knowing* (or acknowledging) God; in our affections estranged and averse from him, in our practice opposite to his holy will and righteous laws, we in a manner were got out of God's possession; were in respect to him become imbecil and *lost*: we were like *sheep gone astray* out of the fold of his gracious care and governance; we had got other Masters, and were come into other hands; like those, who in the Prophet confess; *O Lord our God, other Lords beside thee have had dominion over us*. The Devil had got us into his power; we were *captivated* (or taken alive, as S. Paul phraseth it, *ἐξαρπνισμένοι*) *at his will*; we were detained under wretched subjection, overpowered, and oppressed by him; who therefore is called the *Prince*, and the *God of this world*; to whose suggestions it hearkened, whose will it observed, whom it was prone even to worship and adore. The world also (*whose friendship is enmity to God, which all lieth in wickedness*) had prevail'd over us, so as to walk according to it; to be governed by its corrupt principles, and vicious practices; to be driven by its force, and drawn by its allure-ment into evil. We were captives, and slaves also *to the law of sin ruling in our members*; serving divers lusts and pleasures; being in our actions guided by a *carnal mind*, opposite to God and goodness; swayed by sensual appetites, and hurried by violent passions to what is bad. This was the condition of mankind generally when Christ came, and would have so continued; but out of it he came to deliver us; by the merit of his blood, and power of his grace, to free us from the oppressions of all those usurping powers; to recover and restore us into the propriety, possession and protection of God. He came to seek and to save that which was *lost*: to save us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to deliver us out of the power of darkness, and to translate us into his own Kingdom; the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy. So that he hath acquired us to himself; we being now *μετρώμενοι*, an acquit made by him (as S. Paul calleth us) and *λαοὶ εἰς περισποίησιν* (as S. Peter speaks) a people by acquisition peculiarly appertaining to him: and divers ways we have been acquired to him, as to our Lord.

3. He hath acquired us by free donation from God his Father: for God hath given him power over all flesh; God hath delivered all things into his hand; God hath subjected all things under his feet. Peculiarly God hath given unto him those who comply with his gracious invitations and suggestions; his *sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him*; them hath God given him, to govern them with especial favour, and keep them with a particular care; Whom (saith he) *thou hast given me, I have kept*; and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing*.

4. Again, he hath acquired us by just right of conquest, having subdued those enemies, unto whom (partly by their fraud and violence, partly from our own will and consent) we did live enslaved and addicted: them he vanquished, having spoiled principalities, and powers, and made a shew of them, openly triumphing over them. Whence we rightly fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory; having formerly belonged to his enemies, and having by his mercy been preserved; he might justly have deprived us of liberty, and of life; might have utterly destroyed us, or have detained us in woful misery, as dependants upon, and partizans with his foes; our selves together with them being found in open hostility against him; but according to his great mercy he saved us; and did put us into a capacity of a free, comfortable and happy life under him; calling us to his kingdom and glory. We therefore being *subacti potentiâ* (subdued by his power) become *jure subditi* (in right subject to him) [being *servati* we are made *ser-vi*;] being saved from death by him, we according to justice and reason become vassals to him, so that all our life should be devoted to his service; that (as it is in the hymn *Benedictus*) being delivered out of the hands of our enemies (his enemies, and our enemies also no less in truth and effect) we should serve him without fear.

5. He hath also farther acquired us to himself by *purchase*; having by a great price bought us; ransomed us out of sad captivity and redeemed us from grievous punishment due to us: We, as heinous sinners and rebels, had forfeited our lives to God's law, and were sentenced unto a miserable death; we had lost our liberty, and were thrown into a grievous prison, fettered in guilt, lying under wrath, and reserved to punishment unavoidable; we were stripped of all goods, all comfort, all hope and remedy: such was the case of man, when he procured a redemption, a pardon, a deliverance and restitution for us; delivering up himself a ransom for us all; undergoing a punishment for our sins, discharging our debts, propitiating divine justice, acquitting us from all claims and pretences upon us; yea meriting for us a better state than we did ever before stand in; Thus he purchased his Church with his own blood: whence, as S. Paul argues, *we are not our own, for we were bought with a price*. In requital for such mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we cannot, either in gratitude or justice, owe less than our selves to be rendred up wholly to his dominion and disposal; it is our duty therefore to be his subjects and servants; and it was indeed the intent of his doing so much for us, that we should be so; he did all *gratis* (most freely) as to any precedent motive beside his own goodness, but he would not do it fruitlessly, as to effect: *To this end* (saith S. Paul) *Christ both died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*. He died for all, that they, which henceforth live, should not live to themselves, but unto him which died for them: and, He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

6. He likewise acquired a Lordship over us by desert, and as a reward from God, suitable to his performances of obedience and patience, highly satisfactory and acceptable to God. *For this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name*. For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, and having despised the shame, sate down at the right hand of the glory of God. We see Jesus for the sufferances of death crowned with glory and honour. He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he hath lifted up his head. Because he poured out his soul unto death; therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong; as the Prophet expresseth it.

7. We may add, that he hath acquired a good right and title to dominion over us, as our continual most munificent benefactor; by the great benefits he bestoweth on us, by the ample hire, and large recompence he pays us. He affords us a sure protection under him, and a liberal maintainance; high privileges, and ample rewards for our service: It is no Egyptian bondage that he would detain us in, requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompence, but it is a most beneficial and fruitful service. Christ hath promised to withhold no good thing from his servants; nothing requisite for the support or convenience even of this temporal life (for to them who seek the Kingdom of God, and its righteousness, even all these things shall be added, or cast in) but especially most inestimable precious recompences he hath promised, and will certainly bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings: He will render to every man according to his works; to them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; saith S. Paul: and, *Being freed from sin* (saith he again) *and made servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and in the end everlasting life*: a fruit to sanctification, that is, all benefits conducing to our spiritual welfare here, and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happiness. To them who have been diligent in performing their tasks, and improving their talents committed to them now for his Interest, and honour, he will one day say; *Well done good and faithful servants enter into your Master's joy*: and, *Blessed* (saith our good Master) *are ye, when men shall revile you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great shall your reward be in heaven*. Now he that is at such care and charges for us; who feeds and furnishes us so plentifully, who rewards our small pains, our poor works, our unprofitable services (such indeed we must confess all that we can do to be) with so high and bountiful wages, him surely most justly we should esteem, and most willingly call our good Lord, and Master.

8. Yea

Οὐ γὰρ ἐκεῖνον, καὶ γὰρ καὶ ἀλλὰ ὅτι διὰ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ αἵμα κατεδέει ἡμᾶς ἵνα ἡμεῖς ἁγιασθῶμεν. Chrys. *Ady.* 211

Rom. 11. 32.

3. 23.

Gal. 3. 22.

1 Tim. 2. 6.

Rom. 8. 34.

Acts 20. 28.

1 Pet. 1. 18.

1 Cor. 6. 20.

7. 23.

Rom. 14. 9.

Tit. 2. 14.

John 10. 17.

Phil. 2. 8.

Heb. 12. 2.

Heb. 2. 9.

Psal 110. 7.

Ec. 53. 12.

Psal. 84. 11.

34. 9. 10.

Matt. 6. 33.

Rom. 8. 28.

2 Pet. 1. 4.

Rom. 2. 6.

Rom. 6. 22.

Matt. 25. 29.

Apoc. 11. 18.

Matt. 5. 12.

Καὶ ὅτι ἡμεῖς οἱ κατὰ ἀρετὴν ὄντες, αὐτὸς τὸς πολλοὺς πρὸς τὸν ἐρωτῶντα εἰ βούλονται ἡμῖν δοῦναι ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιεῖν ἐπειδὴ, &c. ἡ δὲ ἀποστολικὴ ἐκκλησία ἡ δὲ διανομία αὐτῶν &c. Chryl. Ἀνθρ. 21.

8. Yea farther yet, our Saviour *Jesus*, is not only our Lord by nature, and by acquisition in so many ways (by various performances, deserts and obligations put on us) but he is also so by our own deeds, by most free and voluntary, most formal and solemn, and therefore most obligatory acts of ours. He is our Lord and King by election; we

finding our selves oppressed by cruel tyrants and enemies; groaning under intolerable slaveries, loaded with heavy burthens, plunged into grievous distresses, tormented with anxious fears, regrets and sorrows, had our recourse unto him, upon his gracious invitation, offering us deliverance, ease and refreshment under his most equal and gentle government: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* — *Take my yoke upon you; — for my yoke is easy, and my burthen light*; so he was pleased to invite us; and so we did, or have at least seemed and pretended to undergo his yoke, freely submitting to his government: We have vowed perpetual allegiance and fealty to him, as to our lawful Prince; we have promised entire subjection to his will, and sincere obedience to his laws; we have engaged forsaking all things to follow him; to follow him as our Captain, and to fight resolutely under his banners against the common enemies of his glory, and our salvation. We did *συμφωνεῖν* (as it is in the *Parable*) *contract*, and agree with him upon certain conditions and considerations, most advantageous to our selves, to be his faithful servants, and diligently to perform his work: We renounced all other Masters; yea resigned up all claim to any liberty or power over our selves; becoming absolutely devoted to his will and command: This we did at our Baptism, in most express and solemn manner, and in every religious performance we confirm our obligation; when we acknowledge his right over us, and our duty toward him; when we implore his protection, his succour, and his mercy; when we promise our humble respect and obedience to him: if our daily confessions do signifie any thing, if our vows and protestations have any truth or heart in them; if our prayers are serious, or praises are hearty, our communions have in them any thing of good earnest and sincerity; we do by them continually tie faster the band of this relation and duty toward him; he by our renewed choices, and consents, and promises, and acknowledgments doth appear to be our Lord. But let thus much suffice for explication of this point; or for considering upon what grounds *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God is our Lord: Now for practical application of the point thereof.

1. The general influence which this doctrine may and should have upon our practice is very obvious and palpable. If we are truly persuaded, that Christ is our Lord and Master, we must then see our selves obliged humbly to submit unto, and carefully to observe his will; to attend unto, and to obey his law, with all readiness and diligence: for, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord; and do not the things that I say*, is the expostulation of our Lord himself, implying it to be a vain and absurd profession, an irrational and illusive pretence we make, when we avow and invoke him as our Lord, but withall disclaim his authority in our practice, by slothfully neglecting, or wilfully disobeying his commands: *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my father, which is in heaven*; that is, not he that makes loud and eager professions (crying Lord, over and over again) is in God's esteem a loyal subject, or faithful servant, or shall obtain the rewards assigned to such; but he that, although perhaps more sparing in words and pretences, doth really his duty, and performs the will of God. *Many* (saith our Saviour again) *shall in that day* (in that great day of final account and recompence) *say unto me, Lord, Lord; have we not in thy name prophesied, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity*. Not only bare professions and acknowledgments are insufficient, but even the fairest and most plausible actions done in the name of Christ will avail nothing, without real obedience to the law of Christ; even then, when such actions are performed, Christ doth not know them; that is, doth not esteem them his servants; the working of iniquity rendring them incapable of that name and privilege. Such persons do, as *S. Paul* speaks, *profess to know him* (or acknowledge him as their Lord) *but with their works they deny him; who are disobedient, and to every good work reprobate* (that is, upon trial found bad and false).

Matt. 11. 28.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

4. 8.

Matt. 20. 2.

Chryl.

Ἀνθρ. 21.

Luke 6. 46.

Matt. 7. 21.

Matt. 27. 22.

Luke 13. 25.

Tit. 1. 16.

false) they (as S. Peter says) deny the Lord that bought them. Do ye not know (saith S. Paul) that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye are, whom ye obey? And, Every one (saith our Saviour) that doth sin, is the servant of sin: And, By whom (saith S. Peter) a man is overcome, to him he is made a servant, or enslaved (*ὑποδουλος*). 'Tis not what we say, but what we do; not what we would seem, but what we indeed are, doth really constitute, and truly denominate us servants: we not only shall lose the rewards and privileges granted to the servants of Christ, but we do even forfeit all claim to the very name if we disobey his commands, being indeed properly servants to those lusts which sway us; to that Devil, whose pleasure we fulfil; to that world, whose bad manners we follow: we do but invade and usurp the name of Christians, if our practice is not conformed to the precepts of our Lord.

'Tis a lye to call ones self a Christian, and not to do the works of Christ, as S. Ambr. saith. *Omnino nihil prodest nomen sanctum habere sine moribus; quia vita a professione discordans abrogat illustris tituli honorem per indignorum alium vitiositatem.* Salv. de Gub. Dei 3. sub fin.

2. Indeed the consideration of this point doth clearly demonstrate to us the great heinousness of sin; how many follies, iniquities, basenesses and ingrati- tudes lye complicated therein: the madness of opposing irresistible power, and dissenting from infallible wisdom; the unworthiness of offending and abusing im- mense goodness; the injustice and disloyalty which are couched in the disobedi- ence of him, who by so many titles, and upon so many obligations is our Lord; the abusiveness of evacuating all his laborious and expensive designs in acquiring us; the levity and giddiness of disavowing him by our practice, whom we so often have acknowledged our Lord, and vowed entire subjection unto.

3. Again, if Christ be our Lord, then are we not our own Lords, or our own men; we are not at liberty, or at our own disposal as to our persons, or our actions: those rules of the civil Law, that a servant can possess nothing of his own, that no profit can simply accrue to him, but all in result must go to his Lord; that he is reckoned no body in law; and the like, do most perfectly agree to us in re- gard to Christ, who is upon so many accounts absolutely our Lord, infinitely more than one man can be to another. We consequently must not think to have our own wills, we must not attend our own business, we must not please our own appetites, or gratify our own desires, or enjoy our own pleasures, or follow our own fancies, or regard our own profits, or seek our own honour; we must not undertake or prosecute any thing merely our own, or farther than doing so is subordinate unto, or consistent with the service, interest and glory of our Lord: otherwise we do constitute our selves the Lords and Masters, in effect renouncing and casting off him: if he be truly our Lord, it is his will, and word, that should be the rule of all our actions; which we should diligently attend unto, which we should readily observe; it is his business, that we should with especial care mind, and most earnestly prosecute; it is his advantage and credit, that we should pro- pound unto our selves, as the main aims of all our endeavours. Whatever we de- sign or undertake of moment, we should do it with this formal consideration and reference; doing it as the servants of Christ; from conscience of our duty to him, with intention therein to serve him, with expectation of reward only from him; according to those Apostolical precepts; *Whether we eat, or drink, or what- ever we do, we should do all to the glory of our Lord: We must glorifie him with our bodies, and our spirits, which are his: We must not live to our selves, but to him that died, and rose again for us: Since whether we live or die (that is, whatever action we set upon relating either to life or death) we are the Lords; we should di- rect all to his honour, profit and service.*

4. If Christ be our Lord (absolutely and entirely such) then can we have no other Lords whatever, in opposition to him, or in competition with him; or other- wise any way than in subordination, and subserviency to him: No man (as he doth himself tell us) can serve two Lords; that is, two Lords having collateral, or equal authority; their injunctions will interfere, oppose or supplant one the other; our affections will incline to one more than to the other; at least we shall be detained in hovering suspence; our leisure, our care, our endeavour being employed in the service or attendance of one will force us to neglect and disap- point the other; *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon;* serving wealth (that is, ea- gerly

- gerly affecting it, and earnestly pursuing it) is inconsistent with our duty to Christ; the like may be said of honour, of pleasure, of curiosity, of any worldly thing; for, *He that will be a friend of the world is thereby* (saith S. James) *constituted an enemy of God*; and if he thereby be made an enemy, he surely can be no good servant; a servant being (as the Philosopher calls him) *humilis amicus*, a meaner sort of friend; who performeth service out of good will and affection; like S. Paul, who discharged that high and laborious service, of preaching the Gospel, incumbent on him, and of that kindly necessity which he expresses, saying, *The love of Christ constrains me*; or as S. Peter enjoins, those particular servants of Christ (employed by him in teaching and guiding his people) to do their duty, *not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind*; or as S. Paul chargeth all servants, *not to serve with good will, as to the Lord, and not to men*. It is indeed the proper nature, and the necessary condition of this service, that we decline, forsake, renounce, detest all other obligations, all affections, all encumbrances, which may avert us from a close adherence thereto. *Whoever* (saith he) *he be of you, that forsaketh not* (or, who renounceth not, who biddeth not farewell to, *his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, yea and his own life*, he cannot be my disciple; he cannot indeed truly and heartily be so, who in love and observance of Christ will not readily forsake and lose all.
5. Particularly therefore, if Christ be our Lord, we are thereby disobliged, yea we are indeed prohibited from pleasing or humouring men, so as to obey any command, to comply with any desire, or to follow any custom of theirs, which is repugnant to the will or precept of Christ: *If* (saith S. Paul) *I did yet please men* (that is, humour, sooth or flatter them, so the word *diakoneo* doth import, *I were not the servant of Christ*; that is, I were not such in effect, I did in so doing not behave my self as a servant of Christ; as it becomes such an one, and as such an one is obliged to do. And, *To* (saith he again) *are bought with a price, be not the servants of men*, (or, ye are not the servants of man, so the words will bear rendring) that is, ye therefore do not, or ye therefore ought not to perform service to men, absolutely as such, or with ultimate relation unto them; but when ye lawfully, and allowably do it, ye do it out of conscience, and regard to Christ as his servants. We may indeed, yea in duty we must obey men humbly and willingly, diligently and faithfully in our stations, and according to our conditions, as we are placed and called in this world, either as subjects or servants; but we must do this in subordination to our principal, and supreme Lord; in obedience to his command, and with regard to his service; so we are taught by S. Paul:
- Eph. 6. 5, 6, 7. *Servants* (saith he) *obey your Masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling* (that is very respectfully and carefully) *in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ; doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good will as to the Lord, and not unto men*: And, *Be subject* (saith S. Peter) *to every humane constitution* *as to the Lord*; (that is, out of conscientious regard, or affection to the Lord; because he is our Lord) *as free, and not having your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God*.
- Col. 3. 23, 24. *Yea, Whatsoever* (saith that wise instructor S. Paul again) *ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompence of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ*.
6. It is we see (which may be another improvement of this consideration) not only an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty; particularly to the performance of those hard duties (so contrary to natural will and stomach) cheerful obedience and submission to men; who often, as S. Peter intimates, are *unjust, crooked, or untoward, and harsh in their dealings with their servants*; to whom yet upon this consideration he enjoins us willingly to yield obedience, no less than to *the good and gentle*; for that in this and all other performances of duty we do serve a most equal and kind Master, who will graciously accept our service, and abundantly requite it; a Lord that will not suffer his servants to want any needful sustenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection or assistance; who will not only faithfully pay them their promised allowance, but will advance them to the highest preferment imaginable. No man ever had

reason to complain with them in the Prophet : *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances ?* No : The Devil himself, with envy and regret observing the benefits and blessings which the pious man enjoyed in regard to his faithful service, could not but say ; *Doth Job serve God for nought ; hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side ? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.* No wonder, argued the detracting Spirit, and little thank or praise is due to a servant, whose service is so bountifully rewarded. Indeed our Lord is not only just and faithful so as to render unto every man *his proper reward*, a proper reward answerable to his proper pains ; but he is exceedingly, beyond expression, liberal in bestowing on his servants retributions infinitely surpassing the desert and worth of all their labours : for their small, weak, faint, imperfect and transitory endeavours (by all which he is indeed really nothing the richer, or the greater) he returneth blessings in nature, in degree, in duration immensely great, precious and glorious. He fails not here to feed them with food convenient, to cloath them decently, to supply all their needs, to comfort them in all distresses, to keep them in all safety, to deliver them from all evil ; he afterwards conferreth on them a Kingdom, an incorruptible and unfading Crown, a state of perfect joy and endless glory.

7. 'Tis a great comfort also for a Christian (how mean and low soever in his worldly condition) to consider the dignity and excellency of this his relation ; how great, and how good a Lord he serveth ; and the greatest Princes are his fellow-subjects (for, *He is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords ; All kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him.*) Yea, that the highest Angels are his fellow-servants (as the Angel in the Revelation told S. John.) That although his Lord be so high in power and glory above all, yet he is so gracious, as not to neglect or despise him ; but condescendeth to regard the lowest of his servants with equal care and favour as the highest : *He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor ; for they are all the work of his hands,* said good Elisha ; and they all, we might add, are the price of his blood.

8. And as it is a comfort to the meanest, so it is no shame or disparagement for the greatest of men to serve such a Lord ; 'tis a relation in it self more worthy and honourable than the highest dignity or preferment in the world : to wear a crown, how rich soever, to command the whole earth, to possess all the land, and all the gold under heaven, are beggarly trivial and fordid things in comparison thereto ; a servant of Christ (the Apostolical stile) is a stile far more glorious than all those windy Titles, which the greatest Monarchs assume to themselves ; having such a place in God's peculiar regard and care doth exceed all privileges and advantages, all glories and dignities, which any person is capable of : Well therefore did S. Paul in respect to the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord esteem all such things (all worldly privileges and benefits) *as loss, and as dung* ; as things detrimental and despicable ; wisely did the Holy Apostles forsake all things (all their dearest relations, all their sweetest enjoyments, all their secular occupations) to follow such a Lord. (*Behold, saith S. Peter, we have let go all things, and have followed thee.*) Most just and reasonable are those sentences pronounced against those vainly proud, or perversely contumacious people, who are ashamed to obey him, or do reject his government : *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, or of my words, him shall the son of man be ashamed of, when he comes in the glory of himself, and of his father, and the holy angels.* Them who proudly disdain to serve him here, will he with just and sad disdain reject hereafter from his face and favour ; yea, with dreadful vengeance will he punish their perverseness : *Those mine enemies (will he say) that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

9. S. Paul also maketh use of this consideration to press upon superiours their duties toward their inferiours ; their duties of equity, meekness, kindness, mercy, pity, and all humanity. *Masters (saith he) yield unto your servants that which is just, and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.* And, *Ye masters (saith he again) do the same things to them (perform the like good offices, shew the same good will to your servants) forbearing menaces, knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.* Thus in Leviticus God commandeth his people not to rule over their servants with rigour, assigning

this reason, *for they are my servants, &c.* And we know how our Saviour, as he doth commend and bless those wise and honest servants who being appointed over his household (that is, being placed in any superiour rank or charge) do behave themselves justly and kindly to their fellow-servants, *dispensing to them their food in due season*; so upon those who injuriously or rudely do beat or abuse their fellow-servants; who are harsh, rigorous or unmerciful in exactions of debt, or in any other dealings toward them; he denounceth severe chastisement. *A servant of the Lord* (that is, one employed by Christ in any office or charge) *must not fight, but must be gentle unto all*, (saith S. Paul;) such indeed should be the humility and goodness of Christians one toward another, that the greatest of them should stoop to the meanest offices and expressions of good will to their brethren: He (saith our Lord) *that will be great among you, let him be your minister, and he that will be first of you, let him be your servant.*

10. The consideration indeed of Christ being our Lord, is in general an inducement to charity, to all sorts of charity. *We must* (saith S. Paul) *walk worthy of our calling, with all lowliness of mind, and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of spirit in the bond of peace, because we are members of the same body, whereof Christ is the head, and fellow-servants of the same Lord.* 'Tis an endearing and obliging relation; it becometh us, and concerneth us, being so of one family, to be courteous and gentle, kind and helpful one to another; to maintain peace, quiet and love one with another; it is a just duty and respect to our common Master, who loveth order and peace, who hateth confusion and dissention in his house; who is himself full of charity toward every one of his, and therefore hath enjoined it as the especial duty, hath declared it to be the most distinctive character of his servants and followers: *Hereby* (saith he) *shall all men know, that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

11. Particularly this consideration doth oblige us to exercise that piece of charity, and of justice, which consists in forbearing rash and harsh censure; which practice is not only very uncharitable, and unjust toward our brethren, but it is also a wrongful and arrogant encroachment upon our Lord himself, unto whom only the right of decision in such cases doth appertain; unto whose infallible and impartial judgment both they and we are obnoxious: *Who art thou* (saith S. Paul) *that judgest another's servant* (or domestick; *ἐκκλησιαστικόν*) *to his own master he standeth or falleth.* And, *Why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother*; and, *We shall all be presented before the judgment seat of Christ.* There is (saith S. James) *one Lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy*; *who art thou that judgest another*? 'Tis, we see, an invading our Lord's right and authority, without most evident and reasonable cause, to censure or condemn our fellow-servants.

12. The consideration of this Point our Saviour doth also improve as an engagement to imitate himself in the practice of all vertue and piety; especially in the practice of charity, humility and patience. It is proper for a servant to follow and attend upon his master in all places, and in all performances; to compose himself in behaviour to the manners and example; to conform himself to the garb and condition of his Lord: Is it not absurd and unseemly, that the servant should be more stately, or more delicate than his master; that he should slight those, whom his master vouchsafes to respect; that he should refuse to undertake those employments, should scorn to undergo those hardships, which his master doth willingly condescend unto? to such purpose our Saviour discourseth; impressing by this argument on his disciples the duties of humility, charity and patience by him exemplified for that very end: *Ye call me, saith he, Master, and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am; if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* And having directed his disciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by subjoining: *The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord; 'tis enough for the disciple to be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord*; that is, the servant in all reason ought to be very well content, if he find such usage as his Lord hath willingly and patiently undergone. And he thus again impresses these duties on them: *He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that*

that is chief, as he that doth serve; for whether is greater, he that sitteth at meet, or be that serveth? but I am among you as he that serveth. Yea S. John raiseth this consideration so high, that he saith thus: Because he laid down his life for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren. Luke 22: 26. Matt. 20: 25. (87.) 1 John 3: 16.

13. Finally, for our satisfaction and encouragement we may consider, that the service of Christ is rather indeed a great freedom than a service; it is a reduction into a most desirable estate, wherein we fully enjoy that wherein liberty is defined to consist, *libertas auctoritas, power of doing whatever* (as reasonable and wise men) we please our selves to do; wherein all things are lawful to us, excepting only such things as are unprofitable to us, or hurtful. What Aristotle made the character of a just Prince (whose government doth no-wise prejudice true liberty) that he doth not in his government chiefly aim at his own profit, but his Subjects good, is perfectly true of our Lord; he is indeed capable to receive no private benefit to himself, beside satisfaction in our welfare; all his laws and commands, all his administrations and proceedings are purely directed to our advantage. Even the statutes, which God gave to Israel by Moses are said to have been commanded for their good, not for any good that could accrue to God from their observance: much more are the laws of Christ purely such; conducing to the health, the safety, the peace, the comfort, the joy, the happiness both of our bodies and souls; of the present temporal life here, and of our immortal state hereafter: His religion is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Well therefore might S. James call the Law of Christ a perfect Law of liberty; well might our Saviour say, If the Son set you free, then are you free indeed. What the Stoicks vanted of themselves, the Christian modestly and truly may say, that he is the only freeman; 'Tis this Philosophy only, to which those words of Seneca may truly be applied: You must serve Philosophy, that you may attain true liberty: for, if to be above the reach of all considerable evil or mischief; if to be safe from all enemies, and secure from all impressions of fortune; if to have no reason much to fear, or much to grieve for any thing; if not to desire things base, or things immoderate; if to have an especial command over ones self is (as those Philosophers define it) properly liberty; then is he most free that serves our Lord. If to be rescued from the servitude of disorderly passions and base vices is the greatest freedom, then the good Christian chiefly doth enjoy it. A good man (saith S. Austin) although he serve, is free; a bad man, although he reign, is a slave; not of one man, but which is more grievous, of so many Lords, as of vices. Such indeed is the benignity of our Lord, that he treats his faithful servants rather as friends, than as servants; Ye are (saith he) my friends, if ye do whatever I command you; I call you no more servants. Yea he bears to them the affection of a brother, and affords them the honour to be so styled: Go (saith he, after his resurrection to Mary Magdalen) to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God, and to your God; and, I will send the Comforter, See ye what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God. 1 John 15: 14. John 20: 17. 1. 12. John 3: 1.

Full of so many practical uses is this excellent Point; the which I leave to be farther deduced by your meditation.

Now, The God of peace sanctifie you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and praise for ever. Amen. 1 Thes. 5: 23.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

SERMON XXIII.

The Incarnation of Our Lord.

MATTH. I. 20.

For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

Τὸ ὅτι ἐν αὐτῇ
τῇ παρθέτῳ,
ἐν τῇ μα-
ρίᾳ ἐστὶν ἀγίον.



WITHOUT any preface, or circumstance of speech, we observe three particulars couched in these words. 1. The Incarnation of Jesus our Lord, implied by the word *τὸ γεννηθῆναι*, that *which is conceived*, or generated. 2. The principal efficient cause of this Incarnation the Holy Ghost; by whose immediate operation, without any active influence of man, he was generated, *is of the Holy Ghost*. 3. The concurrence of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject of that divine virtue and operation; he was *conceived in her*: Upon each of these particulars, being all of them considerable Points of that Faith, which we daily profess (and especially proper subjects of our meditation at this time) I shall reflect, observing somewhat profitable for our edification both in way of right knowledge, and in tendency to practice.

I. Our Saviour Jesus was conceived and born; that is, the only Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, the same who *was from the beginning*, and did (as S. John in the entrance of his Gospel teacheth us) from all eternity *exist with God*, the eternal word of God, by whom all things were made, was in the fulness of time conceived and born; that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, becoming thereby truly and really a man, which wonderful mystery is in Scripture by various phrases expressed and implied; by the word being incarnated, that is, *being made*, or becoming *flesh*; God being manifested in the flesh; The Son of God being sent in the likeness of sinful flesh; partaking of flesh and blood; His taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, being found in fashion as a man, assuming the seed of Abraham: His descending from heaven, coming forth from the father, being sent, and coming into the world: The day-spring from on high visiting us, eternal life being manifested; the result of what is signified by these, and the like expressions, that, The blessed and glorious person, who before from all eternity did subsist in the form or nature of God, being the Son of God, one in nature with his Father (the express image, or exact character of his substance) did by a temporal generation truly become man, assuming humane nature into the unity of his Person; by a real conjunction and union thereof to the divine nature, in a manner incomprehensible and ineffable. He did, I say, truly become man, like unto us in all things (as the Apostle saith) *sin only excepted*, consisting as such of all the essential ingredients of our nature; endued with all our properties and faculties, subject to all passions, all infirmities, all needs adherent, or incident to our nature and condition here.

He was not only (as the Gnosticks and some other Hereticks have conceived) in shape and outward appearance (as a spectre, deluding mens sight and fancy) but in most real truth a very perfect man; having a real body, figured and circumscribed as ours, compacted of flesh and blood, visible and tangible; which

was

John 1. 1. &c.
1 John 1. 1.
John 1. 14.
1 Tim 3. 16.
Rom. 8. 3.
Heb. 2. 14. 16.
Phil. 2. 7. 8.
John 3. 13. 31.
6. 33. 38. 50.
51. 58. 3. 17.
30. 36. 17. 18.
1 John 4. 2. 3.
9. Gal. 4.
10. 16. 27. 28.
Luke 1. 78.
1 John 1. 2.
Phil. 2. 7. 8.
John 10. 30.
14. 9.
1 John 3. 7.
Col. 1. 19.
2 Cor. 4. 4.
Heb. 1. 3. 2.
17. 4. 15.
1st. Athan.
in trad. cont.
Apollinar.
Phil. 2. 8.
Ex. 3. 11.
1st. 2. 11.
Rom. 8. 3.

was nourished and did grow, which needed and received sustenance, which was tender and sensible, frail and passible; which was bruised with stripes, torn with scourges, pricked with thorns, pierced with nails, transfixt with a spear, which was mortal, and underwent death by expiring its breath, and being disjoined from the soul that enlivened it. He had also a soul, endued with the same faculties as ours; with an understanding, capable of learning and improvement (for, he was, as man, ignorant of some things, which he might know; and *He grew*, 'tis said, *in wisdom and in stature*) with a will, subject and submissive to the divine will (for, *Let this cup*, said he, *if it be possible, pass from me; but however let not my will, but thy will be done*; and, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me*) with several appetites, of meat, of drink, of sleep and rest, (for we read that he was hungry, that he thirsted, that he was weary) yea with various passions and affections (*young is ἀνθρώπου μέλι*, I mean, that is, natural and irreprehensible passions) and these of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, such as zeal, pity, sorrow; the which were sometime declared by very pathological significations, and are expressed in high terms: as upon occasion of his friend *Lazarus* his death, 'tis said, *He groaned in spirit and was troubled*: He then, and upon other occasions out of pity and sorrow, did weep; and ye know what excesses of sorrow, what anxieties and agonies, what tribulations, disturbances and amazements the *Evangelists*, using those very terms, describe him to have undergone at his passion; so that, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh, *We have not an High Priest, that could not compassionate* (or sympathize with) *our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted* (or exercised and proved) *as we are, yet without sin.*

So it appeareth, that the Son of God (co-eternal and co-essential with his Father) became the Son of man; truly and entirely partaking of the nature and substance of man, deficient in no essential part, devoid of no property belonging to us; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience consequent upon our nature, except only sin, the which is not a natural so much as a moral evil, did not arise from man's original nature, but proceedeth from his abused will, doth rather corrupt than constitute a man.

Now concerning this great dispensation several inquiries and considerations may be made, concerning the manner of it, how therein God did assume our nature ; or how therein God and man subsist united ; concerning the reason of it whence it proceeded, and why it was designed ; concerning the use and influence of it, which it should have upon our practice.

1. As for the first Point, the manner of this mystery, we may well in discretion and modesty answer with the *Schoolman*; *It is not in man to define what manner of communication this is, whereby the humane nature is communicated to the word*; we cannot indeed otherwise than by negation determine, not otherwise than by comparison explain it. No words perhaps, which we do use to signify our conceptions about these material and inferiour things, will perfectly and adequately suffice to a mystery so much remote from the common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity; to affirm positively, that this wonderful Incarnation did come to pass, that this incomprehensible and ineffable union doth persist in this or that manner may be rash and dangerous; it would cease to be admirable, if we could fully conceive or express it: but this justly and safely we may assert, that whatever manner of conception or expression about it doth plainly derogate from the divine perfections, or is irreconcilably repugnant to the nature of things, or disagree with the tenour of revealed truths evidently connected unto, or depending on this mystery; or which (either directly and immediately, or obliquely and by manifest consequence) doth contradict the language and doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, is to be rejected by us: whence we may for exclusion of errors and mistakes about this Point, with the *Holy Fathers*, and particularly with the great Council of *Chalcedon*, assert, that in the Incarnation of our Lord the two natures, *divine* and *humane*, were united, *unverborum, unconfusum*, *inseparabile, indivisibile, incommutabile, inconvertibile*. *Sym Chalcedonensis Concilii Act. 5. (fin.) (pag. 340.)*

1. The natures were, I say, united *diversim*, that is, without any confusion, or commixtion: for such a way of blending would induce a third nature different from both, such as resulteth from the composition and contemperation of the elements

elements into a mixed body ; such a commixtion being supposed, our Lord would be neither God nor man, but another third kind of substance, such as must not without any ground or authority be supposed ; that would destroy, diminish or alter the properties of each ; which is unsound to say, and impossible to be, for the divine nature is not capable of any diminution or alteration : wherefore both natures in this mystery do subsist entire, distinct and unconfused, each retaining its essential and natural properties.

2. The Incarnation was performed *ἀρρίστω*, that is without conversion or transmutation of one nature into another : The divinity could not be turned into humanity, for how could God (the eternal, self-subsistent, most simple and immutable *Jehovah*) as such, be any-wise changed or made, become infirm and passible, consist of body and soul, suffer and die ? Nor could the humanity be turned into divinity ; for how could that which did not subsist at all before the Incarnation, be therein converted into another thing ? why should our Saviour ever be called man, when his humanity was by translation into divinity destroyed ? why is it said, *the word was made flesh*, if the flesh was changed into the word ? to omit, how impossible it is, that one Substance should be transmuted into another, especially a corporeal into a spiritual, a finite into an infinite ; to omit likewise the many dangerous consequences of this position, and its inconsistency with many principal and plain doctrines of our religion, particularly the real passion and death of our Lord, which could not be incident to him otherwise than as retaining the true nature of man.

3. The natures were also joined *ἀδιαιρέτως*, undividedly, that is, so as they have not distinct subsistences, or do not constitute two persons : for there is but one *Christ*, one person, to whom, being God, and being Man, are truly and properly attributed.

4. We must also understand the natures to be united *ἀχραντως*, inseparably ; so that they never are severed, the union is never dissolved ; the same person never ceasing to be both God and Man ; not even then, when our Lord as man did undergo death ; for he raised himself from the dead, he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen : as being God he was able to raise himself, as being man he was capable to be raised by himself ; the union between God and man persisting, when the union between humane body and soul was dissolved.

We might add, in farther exclusion of erroneous conceits, that this mysterious union was not made *ἐν μέσσει*, by assistance, or close presence only, nor *ἐν ὁρίσει*, merely by inhabitation, nor *ἐν σχέσει*, by relation, nor *ἐν ἀξιολογίᾳ*, by estimation, nor *ἐν ἀπορίᾳ*, by conformity, in will and practice, nor *ἐν συνθέσει*, by consent ; as Nestorians and other heterodox Dogmatists anciently, in opposition to the Catholic exposition of this mystery, did imagine ; but it doth not seem worth the while to discuss those antiquated conceits, or with more subtilty to intrigue the Point.

Salmeron. apud Gerard. in loc. Exeg. p. 441. Bel.

As for illustration of it by comparison, I shall only (passing over divers more wide and improper resemblances ; such as those of *Bellarmino*, the union of a man's arm to his body, the incision of a bough into a tree, and the like) observe, that nature doth afford us one similitude very apposite for explication of this mysterious union ; which is the union of a man's soul and body, whereby he becometh one Person : The soul and body are two substances, very different in kind, in properties, in dignity : the one of it self, material, extended, divisible, passive and corruptible, lifeless and senseless ; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion : both of them are also capable of separate existence, or of subsistence by themselves ; yet are these two, although in a manner difficult for us to conceive or comprehend, closely united together, and do concur to the making up a man ; and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, each retaining its natural properties, without any confusion, or any conversion of one into the other ; so also that from them the same man receiveth the denominations of corporeal and spiritual, of mortal and immortal : In a like manner (although in a degree more admirable and incomprehensible) are the divine and humane natures conjoined in our Lord ; for, as we hear in the *Athanasian Creed*, *As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ*. So much for the manner.

2. As for the reason why the Son of God did assume our nature ; the chiefest and clearest reason thereof was God's design thereby to exercise and demonstrate his

his immense goodness, mercy and pity toward us; So God loved the world, that John 3. 16.
 he gave his only begotten Son: In this the love of God was manifested, that God sent 1 John 4. 9.
 his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him. Through the tender Rom. 5. 8.
 mercy of our God the day-spring from on high did visit us: It was 8. 32.
 the benignity and philanthropy of God, which induced him to engage his Son upon χρησίου καὶ φιλανθρωπίας, διὰ σπουδῆς
 such a debasement and exinanition of himself, that we thereby might be raised to χρᾶ ἰλίου
 a capacity of salvation. Tit. 3. 4.

If we farther desire to contemplate the wisdom of God in this admirable pro- God's choice is
 ceeding; and to know, why God among other means and methods, alike (for reason enough.
 all we can know) possible to him, did chuse in this way to transact our redemp-
 tion; it may be answered, that it becometh us rather to a-
 dore the depth of God's wisdom herein, than to sound it, Nisi enim esset verus Deus, non adfer-
 or to hope by searching to reach the bottom of it: yet some ret remedium, nisi esset homo verus non
 congruities of this method to the reason and exigency of præberet exemplum. Leo M. de nat.
 things are in the Scripture intimated to us, and in some manner are discernible by Serm. 1.

us, sufficient to recommend the divine wisdom therein to our admiration; Rea-
 sons may be assigned why our Redeemer should be δαδρανθῶ, why God, why man.
 It well became God to stoop down thus, that as his goodness toward us was in-
 finite, so the demonstrations thereof, to his glory and our benefit, should be an-
 swerably such; which perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescen-
 sion: As a Prince could not make any other so great attestation of favour to his
 vassal, as by descending from his Throne, laying aside his Majesty, putting him- Eph. 1. 6.
 self into a like condition, conversing freely with him, subjecting himself to the Εἰς ἰσότητα
 same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniencies with him. δοξῆς καὶ ἰσότη-
 It was expedient that our Redeemer should be God, that he might be able by τος αὐτοῦ.

his power to save us; to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our salvation, Εὐδοκίᾳ δὲ
 to subdue those potent enemies which opposed it; to command and conquer na- καταστροφῆς.
 ture, to vanquish the powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf.

It was requisite that he should be the co-essential natural Son of God, that by
 the nearness of his relation to God, by the supereminent dignity of his Person,
 by the immense value of his merit he might conciliate God's favour to us, fully
 appease his wrath incensed against us, and satisfy his justice abused by our of-
 fences.

It was convenient, that his doctrine should carry with it the highest certainty,
 and strongest efficacy; that his example should challenge the greatest regard and
 strictest imitation; that his laws should have supreme authority, and with greatest
 advantage oblige us; fit therefore it was that he should be God, and have the
 character of divinity stamped upon what he said and performed.

The redemption and salvation of man did import an honour too august for any
 creature to be dignified with; it was a work too difficult and mighty for any but
 God to achieve; it was not proper that any creature should be principal in ma-
 naging an affair of such height and importance: needful and expedient therefore
 it was, that our Saviour should be God.

It was also requisite, upon many accounts, that he should be man: that by per-
 fectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will as man,
 he might procure God's favour toward man; that as man had deeply wronged
 and offended God, so man also should highly content and please him; in S. Paul's
 language, that as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners (that is, were Rom. 5. 19,
 condemned and exposed to death, upon God's just displeasure for that one man's &c.
 transgression, back'd with the like in his posterity) so by the

obedience of one man many should be made righteous, (that is, He by his humanity did unite mankind
 all who would imitate his obedience should be absolved from in fraternity.
 guilt, exempted from punishment, and received into grace; Τὸν ἕκαστον ἐν τῇ σπουδῇ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀγ-
 God being well pleased with and reconciled to mankind, es- ήθους. Eph. 2. 15.
 pecially to his followers, in regard to that man's dutiful ob- Ὅτι μὴ ἐκείνῳ τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ αὐτῷ, ἐπὶ
 servance of his will.) Decent it was that as man did ap- καταστροφῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ ὅσῳ αὐτῷ.
 prove, so man also should condemn sin in the flesh, that as man by wilful self- Eph. 5. 30.

pleasing did incur misery, so by voluntary suffering he should recover happiness; Rom. 8. 3.
 * It did (as the Apostle saith) become him, for whom are all things, and by man, That he might
 whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their caste death for
 Salvation perfect through suffering. Col. 1. 22.
* Heb. 2. 10.

As the Devil
did overbear
man—

Evæ advoca-
ta. Iren.
Heb. 4. 15.
5. 2.

Heb. 2. 17.

Ἀνδρῶν
ἡλὸς ὡσαύ-
τως ἰσχυρὸς
ἡμῶν πα-
θεῖν ἔκρινε
vato. Procl.
in Cons. Eph.
pag. 5.

Acts 17. 31.
10. 42.

Ἀναμάρ-
τητος, ὁ
ἐφ' ἡμῶν
ἡμῶν ἡμῶν
Col. 1. 20.
1 Tim. 2. 5.

Eph. 3. 19.

It was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, to propitiate for our faults, to succour and relieve our distresses, should be tender of our good, and sensible of our needs; that he therefore should by nature and experience be disposed *συμπάσκειν* to compassionate our infirmities, and *μετενοεῖν* to be gently affected toward us, in respect of our ignorances and errors; whence *ἀκούσας*, he (saith the divine Apostle again) according to the design appointed to him, and undertaken by him ought, or it did behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God; that he might propitiate for the sins of the people; for, in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour those that are tempted.

He was to be man also, for that by appearing in humane shape, visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us, he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intentions toward us in a more easie, less amazing, and more obliging way, than otherwise could have been: for that hence likewise he could, with more advantage, describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to transcribe; shewing us exemplarily how as men we should behave our selves; how we should moderate our sensual appetites, how govern our passions, how order and employ all the powers of our soul, and members of our Body; how pass through all conditions, and entertain all events befalling us; it not being indeed otherwise possible, that so lively and so suitable a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, humility and patience could have been exhibited to us.

Fit it also was, that he who was to be appointed our Judge, substitute of the supreme Judge invisible, should be, as God (of perfect wisdom, and so able to discern all matters of fact, to distinguish all points of right; of perfect rectitude, so as never willingly to dispart from truth and equity) so also man: visible and audible to us, without surprising astonishment and terror; apt to screen us from the insupportable presence of God; endued with a natural tenderness of good will and compassion toward us, disposed to temper needful severity with competent mildness.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was designed to recapitulate and Reconcile (as S. Paul speaketh) all things in heaven and earth, to be the great mediator and peace-maker between God and man, for the repairing God's honour, and dispensing his grace, for the purchasing our peace, and procuring our salvation, that he should be most nearly allyed unto both parties; that consequently if possible (and what is to God, the author of this œconomy, impossible?) he should be both God and man; Son to God, and brother to us; the same in nature with God, in kind with us. Such reason and wisdom is discernable in this dispensation.

III. Now for the practical use of this doctrine (for it is not a doctrine merely speculative, and barren of fruit, or practical use) it should, first, have a powerful influence upon our minds, causing us, with high degrees of love and gratitude, to adore the infinite goodness of that God, who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might advance us from the lowest depth of meanness and wretchedness, to the highest pitch of honour and happiness, that we are capable of: What words can express, what thought can apprehend a favour so unconceivable, and ineffable? well might S. Paul call it *ἀφ' ὧν οὐκ ἐφ' ἴσθιν ἀνθρώπων, Love transcending all knowledge*: Well may heaven admire, and earth be astonished, and hell tremble at the disclosure of such a mystery, at the accomplishing such a miracle of grace, and mercy; that the sovereign majesty of heaven, the eternal Lord of glory, the worlds great maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, should become a poor, small, weak and frail man; should dwell in a tabernacle of flesh, should converse with silly, wretched and frail mortals here, should be exposed to want, disgrace and pain: *ὡς ἡμεῖς*, O depth of goodness, and mercy unsearchable! if this will not, What consideration can raise us, what benefit can affect us? What prodigious ingratitude will it be, to be regardless, or insensible of kindness so wonderful.

2. Another great use of this point, is to engage us, as universally to all obedience, so particularly to the duties of humility, of patience, and of charity. Did the Son of God thus willingly submit, and so abase himself; and shall we then be refractory, shall we exalt our selves; shall we refuse any appointment, or repine at any proceeding of God? Did he from the highest pitch of glory supercelestial, volun-

Apoc. 6. 2.
Luke 11. 22.
John 16. 33.

Is Victory glorious and joyful? See the invincible warrior is issued forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer*; he that shall quell, disarm, and rife the strong one, that shall rout all the forces of hell, that shall defeat sin, and slay death it self, that shall subdue the world, and subject all things to himself: The captain of our salvation appeareth, triumphing in humility; the great blow is given; the Devil's pride and envy are abased; all the enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his presence; they cannot stand, they break, they scatter, they flee before him.

Is the publishing of Peace acceptable? Behold eternal peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a peace of conscience between man and himself, is now established and proclaimed: the illustrious Ambassador, the noble hostage, the infallible pledge thereof is arrived; *Preaching peace to them that are far off, and to them that are near.*

In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsa sua Ecclesia Christus ad-
junctus est, tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est verbum Dei de utero virginis: Aug. de Temp. Serm. 2.

Gal. 3. 22.
Luke 4. 18.

Is recovery of liberty comfortable unto slaves and captives? Behold the Redeemer is come, the great ransom is laid down sufficient to purchase the freedom of whole worlds: innocence appearing in humane nature hath unlocked the prison of sin, in which we were closely detained, hath broken the shackles of universal guilt, which sorely pinched mankind: he is come, who is anointed to preach *(αἰχμαλωτοῦ ἀποκρίσις)* *dismissal to the captives.*

Is the coming of a good friend to be congratulated? Behold, the best friend to all mankind (bringing with him most wholesome advice, most needful succour, most seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, and dwell with us.

Is it a comfortable thing to be graced with honour? What greater honour could mankind be dignified with, than this of receiving the Son of God into its kind, and kindred? What could more advance, and adorn us, than this high relation?

Is mirth seasonable to the day of Marriage? Behold heaven and earth this day are coupled, divinity is espoused to humanity, an eternal indissoluble knot of amity, of unity, is tyed between God and Man; the great Bridegroom is come forth clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, ready to wed the Church, his beloved spouse.

Luke 1. 78.
79.
Isa. 60. 1.

Is the Sun's rising (after a long, dark and cold night) cheerful and comfortable? See, the *Sun of righteousness is risen, with healing in his wings*; dispensing all about his most pleasant light, and salutary influences: *The day-spring from on high hath visited us*, diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, dispelling the night of ignorance and error, *shining out to those which sit in darkness, and the shadow of death, and guiding our feet in the way of peace*; *Arise, shine, for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, &c.* Never did heaven with so clear and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as it did this day, when

Apoc. 22. 61.
Ascip neu-
wede y op-
deros.

this Super-illustrious luminary (this *bright morning star*, as he is called in the *Apocalypse*) did spring up above our horizon. From this auspicious day commenced the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were exiled from Paradise, condemned to death, exposed to hell; the reinstating us in a condition of hope, in a capacity of happiness; the return of life and joy into this region of corruption, and disconsolateness: This is the day, which *all nations desired*, and earnestly longed for (with an implicate sense) which the good Patriarchs foreseeing did rejoyce; which the Prophets in so magnificent strains did predict and presignify. In our Lord's nativity all mankind was in a manner born, or did revive; was restored from a manifold necessity of dying; from lying dead in the guilt, and under the power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second death* of endless misery. It is in effect therefore the Worlds nativity that we celebrate, annexed to that of our Lord; the beginning of the new, better, spiritual and eternal life to men: all reason therefore we have upon this consideration heartily to rejoyce. How extremely stupid and senseless are we, if the apprehension of goods so many, so excellent hence accustoming to us doth not inspire our hearts with a grateful cheerful-

Psal. 118. 24.

This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce and be glad therein.

Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary.

S E R M O N XXIV.

The Incarnation of Our Lord.

MATTH. I. 20.

For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

Τὸ ὅτι ἐν αὐτῇ
ἐστὶν τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα.



IF every circumstance of our Lord's wonderful Incarnation deserveth to be considered, as affording matter of good instruction, and serving to excite devout affection; then surely the principal causes and ingredients thereof may demand a special regard from us; such are those which are couched in this Text; The efficiency of the *Holy Spirit*, by which it was accomplished; the concurrence of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject, in whom the divine virtue did work it; upon which two particulars we shall reflect in order.

I. It was the *Holy Ghost*, by the singular virtue and operation of whom, without intervention of any man, or earthly Father, the *Blessed Virgin* became impregnated and did conceive. *Joseph* was, as *Israel* was, in outward esteem, the Father of our Saviour (for *Is not this*, said they, *the Carpenter's son? Is not this the son of Joseph?*) the modesty of his Holy Mother being preserved from misprision under the shroud of wedlock, during the time that by God's order the mystery and truth of things was to be concealed from general notice, until the day of his being shewed, and manifested to *Israel*; but God only was in truth his Father, his Incarnation being performed by the miraculous efficacy of God's Holy Spirit; upon which account (beside his eternal generation) he was also the Son of God; for therefore (said the Angel to his Mother) *that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*

Luke 3. 23.

Matt. 13. 55.

John 6. 42.

Luke 4. 22.

Mark 6. 3.

Luke 1. 80.

John. 1. 31.

Luke 1. 35.

The matter of fact was well known to *Joseph* by Revelation, and to the Blessed Virgin her self by her conscience also; and by them it was attested to the Holy Apostles; their attestation being seconded by the Miracles of our Lord, together with all the potent arguments which confirm his Doctrine: Nor do we find, that even the adversaries of our Lord did ever offer to impeach his Parents of imposture, or did any-wise trouble them about this report coming from them. And it is so clearly, and fully affirmed in the Gospels, that it is prodigiously strange that here have been lately some (called *Josephites*) who have questioned it, upon weak pretences of discourse; whom we cannot otherwise consider, than as intolerably audacious perverters of Scripture, or subverters of its authority and use; for surely nothing there can be deemed certain, if this point is not. The fact therefore we must take for granted; and for our farther instruction about it we shall consider three particulars, the manner of it, the reasons for it, the practical use, whereto it may be applied.

Apud Episcopum.

The manner of that operation, whereby the Holy Ghost did effect the humane generation of our Lord, is by the Archangel *Gabriel* expressed to be from the supervision of the Holy Ghost, and the divine power over-shadowing the Blessed Virgin; the which words being of so general interpretation, and as to precise meaning

Luke 1. 35.

Strawson's

meaning so little intelligible by us, may well serve to bound our curiosity, and to check farther inquiry. Some indeed (as the followers of *Valentinus* and *Apollinarius* of old, as *Manno*, *Servetus*, and others of late) have been so bold as to determine, that the Holy Ghost did bring from Heaven a body, which he did convey into the Blessed Virgin; or that our Saviour's flesh was formed of a divine seed, from the substance of God himself; or that in his conception the Holy Ghost did create, and impart somewhat of matter; but it is enough to say, that these are rash and groundless conceits; The holy Fathers, having weighed and discussed such imaginations, to prevent dangerous or misbecoming thoughts and speeches, about a point of so sacred nature, more soberly do teach, that our Saviour was conceived by the Holy Spirit, not *seminaliter*, *seminally*; but *operativiter*, *operatively*; not *de materia*, *by copulation*; but *de virtute*, *by power*; not *de substantia*, *of the substance of the Holy Ghost*; but *de potentia*, *by the virtue of it*; and farther than this, say they, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit*; *Who can declare his generation*, or exactly describe the manner of a performance so very wonderful and sublime; to the which no experience doth furnish any event like or comparable? When therefore it is said, that the conception, or generation was *in utero*, *in the womb*, of the Holy Ghost, the *Preposition* *in* is to be taken for the same with *ex*, or *de* (as it is very commonly used) denoting not matter out of which, but efficiency by which the effect was derived. But,

2. Why was our Saviour conceived by the Holy Ghost? Divers reasons for it may be assigned.

1. It was needful for assuring the Divinity of our Saviour, or his being the Eternal Son of God. That the *Messias*, the Redeemer of the World should be the Son of God was necessary, according to the purpose of God, the ancient predictions, the general opinions and expectations of God's people (often implied in the *Gospels*;) Accordingly such he was as the coeternal Word in his divine nature; but it was requisite that he should also be such according to his humane nature; that by his extraordinary generation, as Man, his other more sublime generation (so much transcending humane conceit) might be more credible, and the world might be convinced of his divinity; for men hardly would have been capable to believe him more than a man, whom they saw born in the common way of men; *Is not this the son of Joseph*, was an argument which they urged against him, when they spake about his *descent from heaven*, *John 6. 42.* and caused them to admire, when they observed the power of his miracles (*Matt. 13. 55.*) and the wisdom of his discourse (*Luke 4. 22.*) but easily might they be induced to admit a mystery, which was countenanced by so grand a miracle, as the birth of a child, by the divine power, without a Father.

2. This was the most fit way of accomplishing that so necessary conjunction of the divine and humane nature: A work of such grandeur and glory, of such grace and goodness, was not to be achieved by any other agent, than by him, who is the substantial virtue and love of God; by whom we see all extraordinary and most eminent works to have been managed, to whom commonly the *opera Dei*, the majestic and magnificent things of God are ascribed; for in the creation of the world, it was *the Spirit of God* which moved upon the waters, forming things, and impregnating them with all kinds of life and vigour natural; He it is, to whom those signal works of providence, the revelation of divine truth, the prediction of future events, the performance of miracles, the renovation of mens minds, and reformation of their manners in a peculiar manner are attributed; So likewise to him this incomparably supernatural, glorious and important act was most properly due.

3. It being necessary that our Saviour should be consecrated to his great functions, and perfectly sanctified in his person, as Man; And those performances (according to the mystical oeconomy of things among the divine persons) being appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the natural spring of all derived sanctity; his efficacy must needs intervene to this purpose: If *Jeremy*, *S. John Baptist*, and *S. Paul* (persons designed for offices and employments in dignity; in consequence so far inferior) were sanctified, and separated by the Holy Ghost from their mothers womb; In how more excellent kind, and degree, was it requisite that he should be sanctified thereby, who was sent into the world to redeem, and purify it from all filth and fault; according to that saying of our Lord, *Say ye of him, whom she*

Damasc. 3. 2.
Just. Mart.
Apol. 2.
Aug. de Temp.
Serm. 6.
P. Leo de
Nat. Serm.

Psal. 7. 12.
1 Chr. 12. 10.
2 Sam. 7. 13.
Psal. 80. 27.
Joh. 1. 34.
49. 11. 27.
6. 59.
Mat. 16. 16.
Mar 14. 61.
26. 63.
Matt. 29.
Mark 1. 24.
Luke 4. 34.

Acts 2. 11.

Jer. 11. 5.
Luke 1. 15.
Gal. 1. 15.

John 10. 36.

the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the son of God? whereas the style of Gods was given to persons devoted to far meaner services.

4. It is needful, that the humane nature, which God did vouchsafe so highly to advance, by assuming it to a personal conjunction and union with himself, should be clear from all stain, and pollution; such as in ordinary propagation doth adhere to our *sinful flesh* and corrupt nature; That he whom God even as man would so dearly love, and so entirely be pleased with should be void of the least inclination to iniquity, or impurity; for (as the *Psalmist* telleth us) *God is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with him;* He is of purer eyes, than to behold evil, and cannot so much as look upon iniquity; How then would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, into so dear a regard, into so full a complacence: He therefore was to be thoroughly sanctified; and thence it was needful that his Humanity should issue from the fountain of Holiness, God's most Holy Spirit.

Futurum hominum salu-rem talis oratus decebat, qui in se haberet humana substantia naturam, et humana carnis inquinamenta nesciret. Leo de Nativ. Ser. 2. Rom. 8. 3. Psalm 5. 4. Hab. 1. 13.

5. It in like manner was necessary, that he who was ordained to appease God's displeasure, and fully to reconcile him toward us, to expiate all our offences, thoroughly to redeem mankind from the guilt, and from the power of sin; who with absolute authority was to teach, to exemplify, to command all righteousness, should himself know no sin; Such an high Priest (as the *Apostle* saith) became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins: The sacrifice expiatory for our offences was to be a lamb without blemish, and without spot: Whence he was to be fully sanctified; and to become *that holy thing* (absolutely) as he was termed by the celestial messenger: Whence from the source of sanctity, the Holy Ghost, whose proper name doth import Holiness, whose proper work it is to sanctify, he was to derive a perfect sanctity and purity in his sacred conception.

2 Cor. 5. 21. Heb. 6. 26, 27. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Luke 1. 35.

6. We may add, as an observable point, the analogy, or apposite resemblance thereof, between the conception of our Saviour for us, and his formation in us; his natural generation and the spiritual regeneration of Christians; his becoming our brother in the flesh, and our being made his brethren in the spirit; both being effected by the same agent. As Christ was made true man, and partaker of our nature, so we become true Christians, and consorts of the divine nature by the operation of the same divine Spirit: As he by the dispensation of God, so we by his grace are born not by blood, nor by the will of flesh, nor by the will of man, but of God; Hence doth accrue a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was made like to us, but also as we become like to him; and are begotten of God, by the same heavenly virtue, the same incorruptible seed.

Gal. 4. 19. Gal. 4. 19. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 10. John 1. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 23. 1 John 3. 9.

It may indeed be an admonition to us to labour after this spiritual conception, which will render us conformable to our Lord, and far more truly allyed to him, than even his partaking our nature hath done; And indeed without that spiritual one, this carnal alliance will not signify any thing of benefit to us; it will little profit us, that he was born in the flesh, if we are not born of the spirit; without which generation we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

2 Cor. 5. 16. John 3. 3, 5.

3. The proper application of this point is to engage us on a thankful adoration of the divine goodness and wisdom; so fully, so fitly carrying on that infinitely gracious work of our redemption; all the divine persons of the Blessed Trinity in a particular manner conspiring, as in the designation so in the execution thereof; The Father mercifully designating and sending his Son; the Son willingly and gladly condescending to come; the Holy Ghost effectually bringing him into the world; to which Blessed Trinity therefore we should render all humble reverence, and hearty praise: And so much for the first particular observed in the Text.

II. The next is, the concurrence of the Blessed Virgin Mary to our Lord's Generation; that which is conceived (or generated) in her.

1 John 3. 9.

The being generated (or conceived, here) we may suppose to respect, at to express his whole humane generation, with the parts and progress thereof; implying on the Virgin's part all that she as a mother did confer thereto; wherein therefore are comprehended the following particulars;

1. His conception of her substance, whence he is called *the fruit of her womb*; and a rod (that is, a branch, or twig) sprouting from the stem of Jesse; and Behold, said the Angel, thou shalt conceive in thy womb.

Luke 1. 42. Isa. 11. 1. 2. The

2. The nutrition, accretion, and entire conformation of his body, out of her blood and substance; whence her womb is said to bear him (*blessed is the womb that bare thee*) to have been * *gravidated*, or great with child, the which as it grew, did swell her womb visibly; so that * *she was found*, or observed, by apparent signs, *to be with child of him*, or to have him in her womb.

3. His nativity it self, or exclusion into the open world; which is thus expressed by the Evangelist; *The days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son.*

Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is to be attributed to the Blessed Virgin; whence she was truly and properly *the mother of our Lord*, and is accordingly often so called in the Gospels; whence also she hath been in the Church defined to be and commonly styled *the bearer and mother of God*; that is, of him who is God; that term asserting the Divinity of Christ, and the Unity of his person [against Nestorism and his partizans; who said, that the Virgin was not properly *theotokos*, but *chrestotokos*; and that He who was born, was not God, but *theopaschos*, a man carrying God, or divinity in him.]

Now for our instruction and use we may resolve the word *her* into three respects distinctly considerable; He was born of her, a Woman; He was born of her, a Virgin; He was born of her, *Mary*; each of which respects is pregnant with matter observable: He was born of a Woman, that was highly needful to be; of a Virgin, that was very requisite; of *Mary*, that doth involve divers circumstances of importance.

1. Our Saviour was born of a Woman.

The *Valentinian* Hereticks of old did opine; that he was only born through a woman, or did merely pass through her, as liquor doth pass through a vessel. But that is a great error; for He was born in her, and of her; in our Text it is *ἐκ τῆς γυναικὸς*, *generated in her*; which in sound expresseth no more, than her containing him when conceived, but according to the force of the *Hebrew* particule *ב* (*Be*) answering to *in* here, is apt to signify more; and must be taken to do so in conformity to parallel expressions; as that of *S. Paul*, *God sent forth his son born in woman*; and that of *S. Luke* (in the best Copies, followed by our English Translators) *the Holy thing that is born of thee, or out of thee.*

Indeed of a woman he was born, that is from the matter and substance of a woman; so as thereby to bear the return of a kinsman to us, becoming consanguinous to all mankind, *which God did make of one blood*; whence *he is not ashamed to call us brethren* [and alloweth us to be of his flesh, and of his bones.]

We may easily conceive, that God could immediately have created a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and have assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served the design of reconciling himself to us, and redeeming us; to the effecting that in the most congruous way, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity in blood was needful, or at least was very convenient and suitable: for our blood being tainted, our whole stock having forfeited its dignity and estate by the rebellious disloyalty of our common ancestors, it was expedient that it should be purged and restored by the satisfactory merit, and acceptable fidelity of one, who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted, and received into God's Family, it was proper that business should be transacted by intervention of a common relation, according to the discourse of *S. Paul*, *God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law* (that according to the obligation undertaken by him, he performing the obedience required by the law, might redeem those, who being tyed to obey the law, had yet transgressed it) *that (it followeth) we might receive the adoption*; that is, that we by virtue and in consequence of that birth from a woman, and of that obedience to the law performed by our brother, might be in capacity to receive the quality or state of Sons to God.

It was likely seemly, that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, had overthrown, triumphed over, and captivated God's creature, in just amends, for the reparation of God's honour, and our consolation, should by the strength and faithful constancy of one, proceeding

ing from a woman, be himself defeated and debased; according to the mystical intent of that most ancient prophecy, or promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head*; of the woman, the man is not mentioned; for,

2. Our Lord was born of a Virgin: so it was anciently presignified and predicted; *a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son*; *A Virgin*; *Almah*, *שׁוּמַר* (so *Ila. 7. 14.* *Aquila*, with respect to the derivation of the word, did render it) that is a recluse; *עלמה* one who perhaps had seldom seen, who *never had known a man*.

This, it seemeth, was that *new thing* (that most strange and admirable thing) which God in the Prophet *Jeremy* did forehew, that he *would create in the earth*, *Jer. 31. 22.* and which should then happen, when he would restore *Sion*, and establish a new covenant with his people; namely, *a woman shall compass a man*; a woman in a manner extraordinary, without the concurrence of a male, should conceive, and enclose in her womb a man; that very man, who should accomplish the great matters there predicted and promised. So it was, and so upon divers accounts it was requisite that it should be.

For how otherwise apparently, to the sense and satisfaction of all men, could he be that which (according to ancient Prophecies, and common expectation, as also according to the exigency of things, and the tenour of divine purposes) he ought to be, both the Son of God, and the Son of Man, otherwise than by coming of a Virgin? He must be born of a woman, that he might truly be the Son of Man; He must be born of a Virgin, that he might be clearly the Son of God; How otherwise could there be an effectual conviction of his divine original?

It was also decent and expedient, that the tabernacle in which God should reside and dwell, should be proper and enclosed; that the Temple of the divinity should be holy and separate; that the soil, whence Holiness it self would sprout forth, should be clear and pure from all sordid mixtures; that none should presume to touch the border of that Holy * Mountain where God so specially would manifest himself; that the lust of man should not approach that place, whence the glory of God would so illustriously shine forth.

It was also most convenient for exciting due attention and regard, for begetting faith, for procuring reverence and admiration in men, that our Redeemer should enter on the world in a manner so peculiar and miraculous: For who that heareth of such an event, can forbear to mind it, and ponder on it? Who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by sufficient and certain attestation he learneth to have been conceived without any concurrence of man? who will not readily defer high veneration to him, who appeareth in a maner so glorious, and supernatural?

3. Moreover, our Saviour was born of *Mary*; of that singular person determined and described in the *Gospels*; of her, that was espoused to, and did live with *Joseph*; with *Joseph* the Carpenter; who was born in the town of *Bethlehem*, who lived in the city of *Nazareth* in *Galilee*; who both according to natural and legal extraction was descended in a direct lineage from *King David*, being (as *S. Luke* saith) *of the house and family of David*, and who by consequence did lineally come from *Abraham*. She her self was also of the same stock and family; as may be collected from circumstances intimated in the story, and certainly may be deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, with the assertions implying their accomplishment.

Of *Mary* therefore, by blood and progeny a Princess, extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth; not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) especially dear to God; who yet in external condition was very mean and poor, living obscurely in habitation with an Artisan, of a painful and not gainful trade.

As for her personal qualifications, they were excellently worthy; for in disposition of mind she was very religious and devout toward God; in the temper of her spirit very sweet and calm, very modest, meek and humble; such the passages occurring in the *Gospels* concerning her do shew her to have been; such particularly that most excellent *hymn* ejaculated by her (wherein we may discover a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable; a devotion full of ardent love, of humble thankfulness, of hearty joy, tempered with most submissive reverence) demonstrateth her to have been.

Of a mother so related, and so qualified, our Saviour was born; both which points were requisite.

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She was so related, for the declaration of God's truth, fidelity and constancy in accomplishing those ancient predictions and promises made to the Fathers ; to Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed ; to David, that of the fruit of his loins God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne ; concerning whom, as by many passages in the Gospel it appeareth, God's people had a general expectation and persuasion, that he should be the rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch growing out of his roots ; in whom the horn of David should bud, who should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen, and rule over the Kingdom of Jacob for ever. And that our Lord should be born at Bethlehem, that he should be called a Nazarene, were circumstances touched in the Prophets, for the verification whereof it was needful that the mother of our Lord should be thus related.

She was also to be so duely qualified as to her state and mind ; being homely in state of life, and holy in disposition of mind ; to signifie, that God did not so much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this vain world, as the inward frame and temper of spirit.

It is indeed no small disparagement to those empty glories, which men are wont so hugely to admire, and it may be a strong inducement to a moderate esteem of them, if we consider it, that God did not chuse for the mother of his Son, and Saviour of mankind, a visibly great Princess, or any to appearance honourable, splendid or wealthy personage ; but her that was espoused to a mechanick artificer, her that was only rich in grace, and deck'd with interiour endowments ; adorned (after the garb which S. Peter recommendeth to women) with the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible purity of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. This is the reflection which she her self did make upon the matter ; for this her soul did magnifie God, because he had regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden ; — he had shewed strength with his Arm, he had scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts ; he had put down the mighty from their seat, and had exalted the humble and meek ; he had filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he had sent empty away : This sheweth the extreme folly of contemning the poor, to whom commonly God expresseth so special regard, who are capable of so high favours, who have so glorious consorts of their state.

Such a person did the Son of God chuse to bear himself, to bear duty unto, to confer that special favour and eminent honour upon ; an honour, among all exteriour honours the highest, that ever was vouchsafed to any of humane kind, or indeed to any mere creature.

I say of exteriour honours, for spiritual advantages, our Lord himself doth teach us in our esteem to prefer above this great privilege ; they being *soto genere*, superiour, and placing us in a nobler relation to him than this ; *Whoever, saith he, shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother* ; the same in a more excellent manner and sublime degree is allyed, is endeared to me, than he can be upon the score of any carnal kindred : The conformity to him in our mind and affections doth render us nearer to him than any cognation of blood ; the having him formed in our hearts is more considerable, than the bearing of him in the womb.

Indeed, the mother of our Lord her self, although as such she was *uncommon*, especially favoured and graced, and blessed among women ; although upon that account all nations must esteem and call her blessed ; although worthily she did in that respect acknowledge, that God had done *magna*, magnificent and mighty things for her ; yet really, in just esteem, to have Christ born in her soul, to have participated of his divine grace and presence in her heart, the Holy Ghost's having produced a spiritual birth of holy dispositions in her, was a nobler honour, and a truer happiness than that ; neither would it, as S. Chrysostome saith, have been any wife profitable to her, if she had not been vertuous, to bear Christ in her womb, or to bring forth that admirable birth ; this our Saviour plainly declared, when as a good woman, transported by the ravishing excellency of his discourse, did cry out, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee*, he thence took occasion to say, *Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it*.

We might also here farther observe, that our Saviour upon other good accounts, willingly did chuse so mean a parentage ; namely,

That he thence might have readier opportunity to undergo and taste the great-

Gen. 26. 4.
12. 3. 18. 18.
22. 18.
Gal. 3. 8.
Acts 3. 25.
Acts 2. 15.
Isa. 11. 1, 10.
Rom. 1. 3.
15. 2.
Pl. 132. 17.
Apoc. 5. 5.
22. 16.
Amos 9. 11.
Acts 15. 16.
Luk. 1. 32.
Jer. 33. 15.
23. 5.
Matt. 2. 5. 21.
15. 23. 9. 15.
27. 22. 20, 30.
42.

1 Pet. 3. 4.

Luk. 1. 51.

Matt. 12. 5.

Luke 1. 28.
48, 49.

* Οὐδὲ τὸ κω-
φοῦναι τὸν
χεῖρον, ἢ τὸν
δαυμῶνον
ἐκείνου τὸν
τεκεῖν ἔχει π
κρίσις, ἀρσῆς
ἐκ τῆς
Chryl. in
Matt. 12. 50.
* Luk. 11. 27.

est inconveniences and hardships incident to our nature, thereby more fully meriting and suffering for us.

That he might have occasion to exemplify the most difficult virtues and duties (humility, meekness, patience, contentedness) shewing us how we should virtuously comport with the lowest state; how we should chearfully sustain wants, labours, pains and disgraces; how we should contentedly be destitute of all the glories, riches and pleasures of this world;

That also the divine power and glory might appear more conspicuously through his worldly state of impotency and baseness.

That he might insinuate the nature of his Kingdom not to consist in secular pomp and puissance, but in spiritual power over the hearts of men.

That he might discover wherein our happiness doth consist; how little any thing, which is high in vulgar esteem of men, is an ingredient thereof: And what is the true grandeur of a man; not his outward garb and retinue, but his inward virtue and goodness.

Finally, this relation of the Blessed Virgin to our Lord, as it should beget a precious esteem and honourable memory of her (for let that mouth be cursed which will not call her blessed, let the name of him be branded with everlasting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any Queen or Empress) so it should not serve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground superstitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among divers sorts of Christians; especially among the adherents to Rome. For,

They (out of a wanton mind, but in effect profanely and sacrilegiously) have attributed to her divers swelling and vain names, divers scandalously unflavoury, some hideously blasphemous titles and eulogies, as alluding to, so intrenching upon the incommunicable prerogatives of God Almighty, and of our Blessed Saviour; such as *the Queen of Heaven, the Health of the world, the Mother of mercies, the Spouse of God, our Lady*, (as if beside our *unus Dominus*, there were *una Domina* in the Church, forgotten by *S. Paul*) with the like.

Ephes. 4. 3.
1 Cor. 8. 6.

They ascribe to her the most sublime attributes of God, together with his most peculiar actions of providence and protection over us, yea of redemption it self.

They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer and praise) to her, and those in a very high manner and strain; professing not only to serve her religiously (which the Holy Scripture chargeth us to do in regard to God and him only) but

to do more than serve her, or to serve her with exceeding devotion.

Who commonly do at the end of their works join, *Praise be to God, and to the Blessed Virgin*; as if she were to share with God in the glory and gratitude due for blessing or success upon our performances.

Laus Deo &
B. Virgini.

All this they do without any plain reason, any plausible authority, any ancient example, yea manifestly enough against the best reason, the commands of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive Church, all which do conspire in appropriating religious adoration to God alone: Neither the Holy Scripture, nor the first Fathers excepting the Blessed Virgin from the general rule; or taking notice of her as an object of our worship, but nipping the first essays of such a superstition in the Collyridians.

Such groundless and foolish conceits, such dangerous and impious practices we should carefully beware; the which, as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his service, and thwart his commands, so they indeed do rather greatly discredit, injure and abuse the Blessed Virgin, (making her name accessary to such enormous scandals) than they do bring any honour, or do any right to her.

And, I doubt not but, *ὡς αἰδώς*, if she from her seat of bliss doth behold these perverse services, or absurd flatteries of her, she with holy regret and disdain, doth distaste, loath, disdain and reject them; with a *Non nobis Domine*, Psal. 115. *Not unto us, O Lord*; and with the Angel in the *Apocalypse*, *Ὁὐκ ἔστι*, Apoc. 19. 10. 22. 9.

See thou do it not.

Acts 10. 26.
14. 14.

Whose greater honour it was in truth, to be a meek and humble servant, than to be the mother of her Lord and Saviour; It is the chief and truest honour we can do her, to esteem her great modesty and humility, to imitate her piety and grace, after her pattern conscientiously to reverence and obey her Son: Unto whom therefore let us with hearty thankfulness render all Glory and Praise.

Amen.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

S E R M O N XXV.

1 COR. I. 23.

But we preach Christ * crucified.

* Who was crucified.
(τὸν ἰσχυρὸν
ἐσταυρώσαντες.)
1 Cor. I. 18.



Cellus Orig.
lib. 2. p. 83.
See. lib. 1. p.
368.
Porphyrius.
Aug. de Civ.
D. 10. 28.
Lucian.
Jul. apud Cy-
rill. 6. p. 194.
Tryphon.
apud Just.
(p. 317.)

1 Cor. I. 18.
Rom. I. 16.

1 Cor. 2. 2.

Tryphon the
Jew in Justin
Martyr, doth
confess, That
Christ, accord-
ing to the
Prophecies of
Holy Scrip-
ture, was to
suffer, but it
did offend
him that he
should suffer
in this kind.
Just. M. p. 317.

Isa. 53. 12.
2 Cor. 5. 21.

THE Doctrine of the Gospel is called *the word of the Cross*; that is, a report concerning our Lord's crucifixion, together with a declaration of the ends, effects and uses of it; this being a special and main point therein, whereto all the rest are closely allyed, and whereon the whole method of our salvation dependeth; a point, which (as S. Paul in this, and in several other places doth acquaint us) of all others did find the hardest entertainment among all sorts of people, to whom it was addressed; few auditors being disposed to swallow it, or able to digest it. The Jews were much offended, that one who suffered by their hands in so vile and wretched a manner, should be propounded to them as their *Messias* and *King*; the same, who according to their opinions and hopes (grounded on their ancient Prophecies plausibly interpreted, and on their constant traditions) was destined to restore them from their afflicted condition, and to rear them into a high state of prosperity. The Pagans took it for an extravagantly foolish conceit, that a person of so mean a quality, and so miserable a fortune, should be such as was told them, *the Son of God*, and *Lord of all things*, the author of happiness, and the object of highest adoration to all men; very absurd and abominable this Proposition did generally seem to the carnal and worldly prejudices of men, who little could understand, and less would consider the sublime design thereof; but to those, who (being endued with a meek heart, and enlightened by divine grace) did rightly apprehend and duly weigh it, it did afford great satisfaction and comfort; it had on them a most effectual and beneficial influence; proving indeed unto them *the power of God to salvation*; as raising in them strong hopes of salvation, and engaging them in a practice conducive thereto. Upon this point therefore our Lord's Ambassadors, the *Holy Apostles*, in their preaching chiefly did insist, declaring the great ends, and excellent fruits of our *Blessed Saviour's* crucifixion; according to that of S. Paul, *I determine to know nothing among you save Christ, and him crucified.*

It is therefore questionless a most profitable, and ever (especially now, when our Lord's passion is by the Church solemnly commemorated) very seasonable subject of our meditation; apt to excite good thoughts, good affections, and good resolutions in us; and as such I mean now to recommend and apply it; endeavouring to assist your meditation by suggesting some remarkable particulars concerning it; and in my discourse I shall not so much generally consider the death and passion of our Lord, as the particular manner and kind thereof, by crucifixion; the which we may contemplate, as qualified with divers notable adjuncts; namely, 1. As a suffering in appearance criminal. 2. As most bitter and painful. 3. As most ignominious and shameful. 4. As agreeable and advantageous to the intents of his passion. 5. As complectory of ancient presignifications and predictions. 6. As apt to excite devotion in us, and to enforce on us the practice of our duty.

1. Let us consider it as a suffering in appearance criminal; or a seeming execution of justice upon our Lord, as a malefactor: *He was*, as the Prophet foretold, *numbered among the transgressors*; and God (saith S. Paul) *made him sin for us, who knew no sin*; that is, God ordered him to be dealt with as an exceedingly sinful,

or

or criminal person, who in himself was perfectly innocent, and void of the least tendency to any fault: So in effect it was, that he was impeached of the highest crimes, not only as a violator of the divine law, in breaking the Sabbath, in keeping bad company, and holding an over-free conversation; but as an impostor, deluding and seducing the people; as a blasphemer, assuming to himself the properties and prerogatives of God, as a seditious and rebellious person, perverting the nation, forbidding the payments of tribute to Caesar, usurping Royal authority, and pretending to be Christ a King; in general, as a malefactor, or one guilty of notable crimes; so his prosecutors (in the Gospel) did affirm, If (said they to Pilate) he were not a malefactor, we should not have delivered him up unto thee: As such he was represented and arraigned; and that altho' by a sentence wrested from the Judge against his conscience, by the malicious importunity of his accusers, he was condemned, and in pretence suffered as such, is clear and admitted by all.

John 5. 18.

10. 30. 7. 12.

Luke 32. 2.

Matt. 27. 63.

John 18. 30.

Now whereas any death, or passion of our Lord (as being in it self infinitely valuable, and most precious in the sight of God) might have been sufficient toward the accomplishing the general designs of his passion, the expiation of our guilt, the appeasement of God's wrath, the satisfaction of divine justice; it might be inquired, why God should so expose him, and why he should chuse to suffer under this odious and ugly character; to satisfy this demand, and that we may the more admire the wisdom and goodness of God in this great dispensation, divers reasons may be assigned, which are intimated in Holy Scripture, or bear a conformity to its doctrine, why it was so ordered. For,

1. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of greatest meanness and hardship, so upon the like accounts he might be pleased to undergo a death of all most bitter and uncomfortable: There is nothing to man's nature (especially to honest and ingenuous nature, wherein natural modesty is not extinct) more abominable than such a death: God for good purposes hath planted in our constitution a lively sense of disgrace; and of all disgraces that which proceedeth from an imputation of heinous crimes is most disgustful and pungent; and being conscious of our innocence, doth increase the smart, and to reflect upon our selves dying under it, or leaving the world with an indelible stain upon our name and memory, is yet more grievous; Even to languish by degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however sharp disease, would, to any ingenuous person, be far more eligible, than in this manner (of being reputed and treated as a villain) to find a quick and easy dispatch; Some touch of which resentment we may conceive breaking forth in our Lord, and somewhat of man's nature discovering it self in that question; Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves? He did it seems, as a man,

Luke 22. 52.

Matt. 26. 55.

loath to be prosecuted as a thief; yet he willingly chose it; as he purposely did embrace other the worst of distastful things, belonging to our nature, and incident to that lowly condition, into which he did put himself; (not only being made in the likeness of man, but taking the form of a servant) to endure want, and to fare hardly; to be slighted, envied, hated, scorned and reproached through the whole course of his life. Had he dyed in any other way, he had not been so complete a sufferer, nor had tasted the worst of what men can and do endure; there had been a comfort in seeming innocent, which had impaired the perfection of his undertaking. Often was he in danger of death, both from the close machinations, and from the open violences of those who maligned him; but he industriously declineth a death so easy, and so honourable, if I may so speak; it not being so disgraceful to fall by private malice, or by sudden rage, as by the solemn and deliberate proceeding of persons in publick authority, and great credit.

John 5. 18. 8.

37. 40. 59. 7.

1. 19. 25. 10.

12. 38.

This kind of death he did foresee, and plainly with satisfaction did aim at; He (as we have it related in the Gospel) did shew his disciples, that it was incumbent on him (by Gods appointment, and his own choice) to be rebuffed, to be reproached by the Chief Priests, Elders and Scribes; to be despised by them; to be condemned, and delivered up to the Gentiles, to be mocked and scourged, and crucified; as a most flagitious slave.

Matt. 16. 21.

Luke 9. 22.

Mark 9. 12.

Amos 6. 1.

Isaiah 53. 7.

Thus would our Saviour, in conformity to all the rest of his voluntary afflictions, and for a consummation of them, not only suffer in his body, by fore bruises and wounds, in his soul by the bitterest sorrows and agonies; but in his name also and reputation by the foulest scandals; undergoing as well all the infamy,

famy,

family, as the infirmity which did belong unto us, or could befall us; thus meaning by all means to express his charity, and exercise his compassion toward us; thus advancing his merit, and yielding the utmost satisfaction to justice in our behalf. Again,

2. Death passing on him as a malefactor by publick judgment, did best sute to the nature of his undertaking, was most congruous to his design in suffering, did most aptly represent what he was doing, and imploy the reason of his performance. We all were guilty in a most high degree; we deserved an exemplary condemnation; the sharpest pain, together with the greatest shame, was due to us for our unworthy offending our most great, and our most good Lord and Maker; He did undertake in our stead to bear all this, and fully to satisfy for us; He therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment, being reputed, being termed, being treated as we should have been, in quality of a notorious malefactor, as we in truth are. What we really had acted in dishonouring and usurping upon God, in disordering and troubling the World, in deceiving and perverting others (by our negligent mistakes, and our presumptuous miscarriages; by our evil practices and contagious examples) that was imputed to him, and avenged on him; *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all*; he therefore did not only sustain an equivalent punishment, but in a sort did bear an equal blame with us before God and man. Farther,

Ila. 53. 6.

Deut. 1.

2 Chr. 19. 6.

Ker' 14.

John 19. 11.

3. Seeing it was determined that our Lord should die for us, and that not in a natural but violent manner, so as perfectly to satisfy God's justice, to vindicate his honour, and to evidence his indignation against our sins; it was most fit, that he should perform it in that way, wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernable; wherein it should be most apparent, that God did exact and inflict punishment on him, that he did yield unto it, and submissively undergo it. *All judgment (as Moses said in his charge) is God's*; or is administered in his name, by authority derived from him; all Magistrates being his Officers and instruments, by whom he governeth and ordereth the world, his Kingdom; whence that which is done in way of formal judgment by persons in authority, God himself may be supposed in a more special and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commission, in his stead, on his behalf; with his peculiar superintendence and guidance; It was therefore in our Saviour a signal act of submission to God's authority and justice, becoming the person which he sustained of our proxy and redeemer, to undergo such a judgment, and such a punishment; whereby he received a doom as it were from God's own mouth, uttered by his Ministers; and bare the stroke of justice from God's hand, represented by his instruments; wherefore very seasonably and pertinently did he reply to Pilate, avowing his authority under God in those words, *Thou hadst no power over me (or against me) except it were given thee from above*; implying, it was in regard to that originally supreme authority of God his Father, and to his particular appointment upon that occasion, that our Saviour did then freely subject himself to those inferior and subordinate powers, as to the proper ministers of divine justice; Had he suffer'd in any other way, by any private malice or passion of men, God's special providence in that case had been less visible, and Christ's obedience not so remarkable; And if he must die by publick hands, it must be as a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit; there must be a formal process, how full soever of mockery and outrage; there must be testimonies produced, however false and groundless; there must be a sentence pronounced, although most partial and corrupt; for no man is persecuted by authority without some colour of desert; otherwise it would cease to be publick authority, and become private violence; the prosecutor then would put off the face of a Magistrate, and appear as a murderer, or a thief.

4. In fine, our Saviour perhaps in no other way, with such advantage, could have displayed all kinds of virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, and the furtherance of our benefit, as in this: The Judgment-hall, with all the passages leading him thither, and from thence to execution, attended on by guards of soldiers, among the crowds and clamours of the people, were as so many theatres, on which he had opportune convenience visibly, in the eye of the world, to act divers parts of sublimest virtue; to express his insuperable constancy in at-

testing

testing truth and maintaining a good conscience, his meekness in calmly bearing the greatest wrongs, his patience in contentedly enduring the saddest adversities; his entire resignation to the will and providence of God; his peaceable submission to the law and power of man; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing, in obliging those by his good wishes and earnest prayers for their pardon, who in a manner so injurious, so despiteful, so cruel, did persecute him; yea in willingly suffering all this for their salvation: all these excellent virtues and graces, by the matter being thus ordered, were in a degree most eminent, and in a manner very conspicuous, demonstrated to the praise of God's name, and the advancement of his truth; for the settlement of our faith and hope; for an instruction and encouragement of good practice to us. Upon such considerations it might be expedient, that he should suffer in this kind as a criminal.

Was Crucified.

S E R M O N XXVI.

I COR. I. 23.

But we preach Christ crucified.



IT is added in the Creed, under Pontius Pilate; *ἐν Πόντιου Πιλάτῳ*; in which words the preposition *ἐν* may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen in the time of Pontius Pilate his government, or presidency over Judea; so the word *ἐν* is very frequently used; or it may also farther imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion; so that it might also be rendred, by, or under Pontius Pilate, as President and Judge; thus is the word sometimes used (as for instance, where in the Gospel it is said, *ἐὰν ἀκούσῃς τὸ ἐν τῷ ἡγεμῶνι, εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*, if this be heard by the Governour, or if it come to the Governour's ear, as it is rendred in our Translation.) Neither of these senses were, I suppose, distinctly, but both rather conjunctly intended here; in relation to the Evangelical History; the which (as to the main obvious passages) we are here supposed to know, and do profess to believe; neither do I think any thing more of mystery designed here beyond the full and clear determination of our Saviour's Person; or the declaration of whom we do believe in by circumstances most apt and suitable to that purpose; the time when, the person under whom, and consequently the place where, and manner how he suffered. However all these circumstances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice: Let us therefore touch upon them.

1. The time, in it self most fit, and most agreeable to divine predictions, doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, doth confirm his veracity, his constancy and his fidelity: For when the fulness of time was come; when the Scepter of Legislation and Sovereign authority was just departed from Judah; while the Jewish Temple did stand, but was shortly to be destroyed; before the Jews were utterly unsettled, and dispersed; when the LXX. hebdomades (of years) were near expiring, the time when the Messiah should be cut off; when Judaism was by numerous accession of Profelytes diffused over the world; the Sacred Writings being translated, and legible every where; when the world was in the most general peace, and deepest calm; consequently mens attention being then more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction and persuasion concerning di-

Matt. 28. 14.

Dan. 9. 26.

vine

vine truths; when the most considerable part of the world was united under one Empire (or under two, that of the *Romans*, and that of the *Parthians*) and thence more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual Common-wealth (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction) when mankind by learning and policy was generally better civilized than ever, more inquisitive after knowledge, and more receptive of truth; when in short all things were duly prepared, and suited for the great effects designed by God to proceed from our Saviour's passion, and other performances, then did he suffer, and do what God had in his wisdom and goodness predetermined, presignified and predicted. I might add, that the time was fit to be set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncertainty about it.

2. As for the *Person* under whom our Lord suffered; if we consider him as a *Roman-stranger* (or *Gentile*) or as a *Governor* and *Judge*; or with regard to his personal qualities; or according to his deportment in this affair; something in all these respects may present it self observable by us.

He was an alien from the Common-wealth of *Israel*; so *Jews* and *Gentiles* conspired in violence and injury against their common Saviour; that so in type and mystery it might be signified how the sins of all men did jointly bring him to his death; *that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.* Neither was it for nothing decreed by God, that the *Jews* should (as our Saviour foretold) *deliver him up* (*παραστήσαντες*) to the *Gentiles*, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him. The *Jews* out of envy and malice delivered him up, accused and prosecuted him, instigated and importuned against him; The *Gentiles* out of ignorance, profaneness and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him; whereby the ingratitude, iniquity and impiety of all mankind did in some sort appear, and was aptly represented; and consequently his immense goodness is demonstrated, who for so impious, unjust and flagitious a generation, for so malicious enemies, for so cruel persecutors of himself did willingly suffer: them, who so combined in mischief against him, he then designed to conjoin in reconciliation to God, and in mutual peace and charity toward one another; *reconciling both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*

A *stranger* also was proper for the management of this affair as apt to be a more fair and indifferent Judge; doing what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial, for vindication of his personal innocence, and declaration of the iniquity practised against him.

Again, if we consider *Pilate* as a *Governor* and *Judge*; (for so he was, *Cæsar's* Procurator, and President of *Judea*, *πρόεδρος*, and *ἀρχαιστής* he is called) we therein may discern the wisdom and special providence of God; punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of Justice; the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and to man, although in a case of a plain outrage and highest injustice against himself; the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed by God to men, and the venerable name of justice were so abused; for if ever, then one might have said with the *Preacher*, *I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness, was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.*

As for *Pilate's* personal qualities; he is by the *Historians* writing near those times reported to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper, willful and haughty in spirit, violent, rapacious and cruel in his proceedings, and was therefore a proper instrument of providence for execution of such a business; so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so villanous and barbarous according to man's intention; Such a person deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so execrably base; was worthy to be employed therein, and ready enough to undergo it: It had not in it self been so plausible that such an act should, nor so credible that it could proceed from any person otherwise of good disposition, or right intention; but for him it was proper, of him it could not be improbable; who by his former violences (such as upon the complaints of this people did soon after, as *Josephus* telleth, remove him from his charge) had so incensed the *Jews*, that he would not stick to gratify them in a manner wherein they so earnestly concerned themselves; and which in semblance (fitting aside considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest; in yielding up so poor, so

Rom. 3. 19.
Matt. 20. 19.
27. 18.

Rom. 5. 6. 8.
10.
1 Pet. 3. 18.

Eph. 2. 16.
Col. 1. 20.

Matt. 27. 2.
Etc.

Eccles. 3. 16.

Joseph. Ant.
iq. 18. 5.

so as to outward shew inconsiderable a person, as a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage: *Pilate* (saith S. Mark) willing to content the people, released *Barabbas* unto them, and delivered *Jesus*, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. Mark 15. 15.
Τὸ λαὸν
ᾠκισμένον
ἔχοντα.

Such an one he was; and yet it is observable, that in comparison to the furious *Jews*, he behaved himself with some moderation and ingenuity: He was so fair in examination of the case, as notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecution, to discern the right, and to declare our Saviour guiltless: He was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the *Jews*, once, twice, and a third time to challenge them, *Why, what evil hath he done?* as often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea his will and intention, his earnest desire) to free the innocent person: Yet had he not the heart or the honesty throughly to resist their importunities; they were more obstinate in their wicked designs, than he resolute in his good purposes: So partly, out of fear to offend them, partly out of favour to oblige them (those two usual corrupters of right judgment) he yielded to them, unworthily suffering himself to be overborn by their wicked solicitations, so sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest, and their implacable malice. Thus did the heathen Judge behave himself, serving divine providence, not only in the publick and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due unto us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame deserved by himself: In shew he condemned our Saviour, in truth he condemned himself, the corrupt Judge; and the *Jews*, the malicious accusers: though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation; affording a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence; such as was requisite to convince all *Jewish* slanders and aspersions; and sufficient to confirm our faith. John 19. 6.
Luke 23. 14.
86.
John 19. 12.
24.
Luk. 23. 20.
Acts 3. 13.
Καὶ τὸν
ἀνέστη
ἀνὴρ.

3. Farthermore, the name of *Pontius Pilate* intimateth the place of our Saviour's passion; he being well known to have been Governour of *Judea*, and to have his Tribunal of Justice at the mother City thereof, *Jerusalem*: at *Jerusalem*, that bloody City, as the Prophet calls it; whose character it was to be the killer of the Prophets, and the stoner of them who were sent unto her; out of which it was (in a sort) impossible, that a Prophet should perish; yet the place of all the world most favoured, and graced by God by special blessings and privileges; at *Jerusalem*, his own peculiar seat; the City of God, the City of the great King it is stiled; the which he out of all the Tribes of *Israel*, out of all the people of the earth had chosen to put his name (to place his especial presence) there; the holy and beloved City; there at his own doors as it were, before his own sacred Palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged and executed; by procurement of his own servants, peculiarly related to him, the Chief Priests, and Elders of his chosen people, persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dignified by him; whose office and especial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to procure, by their instruction and practice, honour to God and obedience to his commandments; which circumstance considered as it highly advances the goodness of him, who willingly suffered there, and by such persons; so it much aggravateth man's ingratitude and iniquity. Ezek. 22. 2.
24. 6.
Luke 13. 33.
34.
Psal. 48. 2.
87. 3.
Deut. 12. 5.
Neh. 9. 1.
Ezra 6. 12.
1 Kings 11. 32.
Mat. 4. 5.
27. 53.
Apoc. 19. 9.
86.

I shall now proceed to handle the rest of the Particulars which I proposed in the beginning of the last Discourse.

II. We may consider that his suffering was most bitter and painful. We may easily imagine, what acerbity of pain must be endured by our Lord in his tender limbs being stretched forth, racked and tendered, and continuing a good time in such a posture; by the piercing his hands and his feet, parts exquisitely sensible, with sharp nails, (so that as it is said of *Joseph*, the iron entred into his soul) by abiding exposed to the injuries of Sun scorching, wind beating upon, whether searching his grievous wounds and sores: Such a pain it was, and that no stupifying, no transient pain, but a pain very acute, and withall lingering: for we see that he, and those who suffered with him, had both presence of mind, and time to discourse; even six long hours did he continue under such torture, sustaining in each minute of them beyond the pangs of an ordinary death. But as the case was so hard and sad, so the reason thereof was great, and the fruit answerably excellent: Our Saviour did embrace such a passion, that in being thus ready to endure the most grievous smarts for us, he might demonstrate the vehemence of his Psal. 105. 18.
O. T.
Mark 15. 25,
34.

his love ; that he might signify the heinousness of our sins, which deserved that from such a person, so heavy punishment should be exacted ; that he might appear to yield a valuable compensation for those everlasting tortures which we should have endured ; that he might thoroughly exemplify the hardest duties of obedience and patience. Farther,

Quod etiam
domine libero
quamvis no-
cente videatur
indignum.
Lact. 4. (p.
436.)

III. We may consider this sort of punishment as most sharp and afflictive, so most vile and shameful ; being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and unworthy (as Lactantius saith) of a freeman, however innocent, or guilty. It was servile supplicium, a punishment never by the Romans, under whose Law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon freemen, but only upon slaves, that is upon people scarce regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited or lost themselves ; and among the Jews likewise, that execution, which most approached thereto, and in part agreed with it (for they had no so inhumane punishment appointed by their Law) hanging up the dead bodies of some who had been executed, was deemed most infamous and execrable ; for *cursed*, said the Law, *is every one that hangeth upon a tree* ; cursed, that is devoted to reproach and malediction ; *accursed of God*, it is in the Hebrew ; that is, seeming to be deserted by God, or to be exposed to affliction by his special order.

Deut. 21. 23.
Gal. 3. 16.
Τὸ γὰρ μόνον
ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ τῆς
ἐκείνης
ἐγένετο.
Chryl. Tom.
6. Or. 61.

Indeed, according to course of things, to be raised on high, and for continuance of time, to be objected to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous posture, doth breed ill suspicion, doth provoke censure, doth invite contempt, scorn and obloquy ; doth naturally draw forth language of derision, despight and detestation, especially from the inconsiderate, rude and hard-hearted vulgar ; which commonly doth think, speak, deal with men according to event and ap-

Heb. 10. 33.

pearance (—*sequitur fortunam semper & odit Damnatos*) whence *παρελθόντες*, *to be made a gazing stock*, or object of reproach to the multitude, is accounted by the Apostle as an aggravation of the hardships endured by the primitive Christians : And thus in the highest degree did it happen to our Lord ; for we read that the

Luke 23. 35.

36.

Matt. 27. 38.

Psal. 22. 6, 7.

people did in that condition, mock, jeer and revile him ; *ἐξουπρίοντο, ἐβέλυνον, ἐβλασφήμουν*, they drew up their noses, they shot out their lips, they shook their heads at him ; they let out their wicked and wanton tongues against him ; verifying that prediction in the Psalm, *I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people ; all they that see me laugh me to scorn ; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him* : In this case the same persons, who formerly had ad-

Matt. 9. 33.

21. 9. 12. 23.

Luke 4. 15.

Luke 23. 35.

Psal. 22. 17.

mired his glorious works, who had been ravished with his excellent discourses, who had followed and favoured him so earnestly ; who had blessed and magnified him (for he, saith S. Luke, *did teach in their Synagogues, δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ πάντων, being glorified by all*) even those very men did then behold him with pitiless scorn and despight ; *εὐσκήνουν αὐτὸν ὁ λαὸς*, the people, saith S. Luke, *stood gazing upon him*, in correspondence to that in the Prophet, *they look and stare upon me* ; they looked in a scornful manner, venting contemptuous and spiteful reproaches, as we see reported in the Evangelical Histories.

Heb. 12. 2.

Thus did our Saviour *endure the cross, despising the shame* ; despising the shame, that is, not simply disregarding, or disesteeming it, as no evil, with a Stoical haughtiness, or Cynical immodesty ; but not eschewing it, or not valuing it as so great an evil, that for declining it he would neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious designs. There is in man's nature an aversion and abhorrency from disgraceful abuse, no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain ; whence

Heb. 11. 36.

cruel mockings and scourgings we find coupled together, as ingredients of the sore persecutions sustained by God's faithful Martyrs ; and generally men will more readily embrace, and more contentedly support the latter than the former ; pain not so grievously affecting the lower sense, as being insolently despised, doth grate on the fancy and wound the mind ; for the wounds of infamy do as the

Prov. 18. 8.

12. 18.

Wise Man telleth us, *go down into the innermost parts of the belly*, piercing the very hearts of men, and touching the soul to the quick. We need not therefore doubt but that our Saviour (as a man, endued with humane passions and infirmities) was sensible of this natural evil ; and that such indignity did add somewhat of bitter and loathsomeness to his cup of affliction ; especially considering that his great charity disposed him to grieve, observing men to act so very indecently, so unworthily, and so unjustly toward him ; yet in consideration of the glory that would

would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to us, of the joy that was set before him, when he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, he did most willingly undertake and gladly undergo it: He became, as the Apostle saith, a curse for us, or was exposed to malediction and reviling; he endured the contradiction (or obloquy) of sinful men, he was despised; rejected and disesteemed of men; he in the common apprehensions of men did seem deserted by God, according to that of the Prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*; he did himself in a manner seem to concur in that opinion, as by that woful outcry, *Lama sabachani*, doth appear: So did he become a curse for us, that, as the Apostle subjoineth, *we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law*, that is, that we might be saved from that exemplary punishment due to our transgressions of the Law; with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and the disgrace before men attending it: He chose thus to make himself of no reputation (as the Apostle speaketh) being contented to be dealt with as a wretched slave and wicked miscreant, that we might be exempted not only from the torment, but also from the ignominy we had deserved; that we together with our life, and safety, and liberty, might recover even that honour which we had forfeited.

But lest any one should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferings of our Lord, as things not so rare, but that other men have tasted the like; or should be ready to compare them with the sufferings of other vertuous men, as Celsus did with those of Anaxarcus and Epictetus; I shall by the bye interpose somewhat observable concerning them. We may then consider, that not only the infinite excellency of his person, and the perfect innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his sufferings, but some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances, did increase their force: He was not only, according to the frame and temper of humane nature, sensibly affected with the pain and shame, and all the rest of evils apparently waiting on his passion; as God (when he did insert sense and passion in our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend that we should be, and as other men in like outward circumstances would have been, but in many respects beyond that ordinary rate: No man, we may suppose, could have felt such grief from them as he did, no man did ever feel any thing comparable to what he did endure; it might be truly applyed to him, *Behold and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger*, as that extraordinary sweating great lumps of blood may argue; as the terms expressing his affliction do intimate; for in regard to present evils his soul is said to have been exceedingly sorrowful unto death; he is said *to be in great anguish and anxiety*; and to be in an agony, or pang: In respect to mischiefs which he foresaw coming on, he is said *to be disordered, or disturbed in spirit*, and *to be amazed, or dismayed at them*; to such excessive height of passion did the sense of incumbent evils, and the prospect of impendent disasters, the apprehension of his own case, and reflection upon our state raise him: And no wonder, that such a burthen, the weight of all the sins (the numberless heinous sins and abominations) which he did appropriate to himself, that ever have been, or shall be committed by mankind, lying upon his shoulders, he should feel it heavy, he should seem to crouch and groan under it; *Innumerable evils* (said he in the mystical Psalm) *have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me*. God's indignation so dreadfully flaming out against sin might well astonish and terrifie him; to stand before the mouth of hell belching out fire and brimstone upon him, to lie down in the hottest furnace of divine vengeance, to undertake with his heart-blood to quench all the wrath of heaven, and all the flames of hell (as he did in regard to those who will not rekindle them to themselves) might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpressible pressures of anguish; when such a Father (so infinitely good and kind to him, and whom he so dearly loved) did hide his face from him, did angrily frown on him, How could he otherwise than be sorely troubled? It is not strange, that so hearty a love, so tender a pity contemplating our sinfulness, and sustaining our wretchedness, should be deeply affected thereby; any one of those persons, who fondly do pretend to, or vainly glory in a stupid Apathy, or in a stubborn con-

tempt of the evils incident to our nature and state, would in such a case have been utterly dejected; the most resolved Philosopher would have been dashed in to confusion at the sight, would have been crushed to despair under the sense of those calamities which assaulted our Lord. With the greatness of the causes, the goodness of his constitution might also conspire to augment his suffering; for surely as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, his affections most pliant and tractable; so accordingly should the impressions upon him be most sensible; and consequently the pains which he felt both in soul and body most sharp and afflictive. That we in like cases are not alike affected, that we do not tremble at the apprehensions of God's displeasure, that we are not affrighted with the sense of our sins, that we do not with sad horror resent our own danger, or our misery; doth arise from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of those things, or that they do not in so clear and lively a manner strike our mind and fancy; (not appearing in their true nature and proper shape, so heinous and so hideous, as they really in themselves, and in their consequences are) or because that we have but weak persuasions about them; or because we do but slightly consider them; or from that our hearts are hard and callous, our affections cold and dull, so that nothing of this nature (nothing beside gross material affairs) can easily move or melt them; or for that we have in us small love to God, and little regard to our own true welfare; for that briefly in respect to spiritual matters, we are neither so wise, so serious, so sober; nor so good and ingenuous in any reasonable measure, as we ought to be: But our Saviour in all these respects was otherwise disposed; he most evidently discerned the wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to his imagination and spirit; he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew all that God's law had declared about them; he thoroughly did consider and weigh them; his heart was most soft, and sensible, his affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects; He was full of dutiful love to God his Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will toward us; whence 'tis not marvellous, that as a man, as a transcendently good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences; that his imagination was so troubled, and his affections so mightily stirred by them; so that he thence truly did suffer in a manner, and to a degree unconceivable; according to that ejaculation in the Greek Liturgies, *Ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἀσώματος καὶ ἀβυσσὸς ἐλέους ἡμῶν, χεῖρ, Ὁ Θεὸς, ὁ ἀσώματος καὶ ἀβυσσὸς ἐλέους ἡμῶν, χεῖρ, By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us.* But farther,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering had in it some particular advantages conducing to the accomplishment of our Lord's principal design.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent time were good advantages; for if he had been privately made away, or suddenly dispatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction (his most divine patience, meekness and charity) so illustriously shone forth: Wherefore (to prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, and for other collateral good purposes) divine providence did so manage the business, that as the course of his life, so also the manner of his death should be most conspicuous and remarkable; *These things* (as S. Paul told King Agrippa) *were not done in a corner*; and, *I, said our Lord himself, spake freely to the world; and in secret have I done nothing*: So were the proceedings of his life, not close or clancular, but frank and open; not presently hushed up, but carried on leisurely in the face of the world; that men might have the advantage to observe and examine them. And as he lived so he died most publicly and visibly, the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and thence ready to embrace his doctrine; according to what he did himself foretell, *I being lifted up from the earth shall draw all men unto me*; he drew all men by so remarkable a death to take notice of it, he drew some from the wondrous consequences of it to believe on him: And, *As, saith he again, Moses did exalt the Serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted*: The elevation of that mysterious Serpent upon a pole did render it visible, and attracted the eyes of people toward it; whereby God's power invisibly accompanying that Sacramental performance, they were cured of those

those mortiferous stings which they had received; so our Lord being mounted on the Cross, allured the eyes of men to behold, and their hearts to close with him: whereby the heavenly vertue of God's spirit cooperating, they become saved from those destructive sins, which by the Devil's serpentine instigations, they had incurred.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was, that by it the nature of that Kingdom, which he intended to erect, was evidently signified; that it was not such as the carnal people did expect, an external, earthly, temporal Kingdom, consisting in domination over the bodies and estates of men, dignified by outward wealth and splendor, managed by worldly power and policy, promoted by force and terror of arms, affording to men the advantages of outward safety, peace and prosperity; but a kingdom purely spiritual, heavenly, eternal; consisting in the government of mens hearts and spirits; adorned with endowments of piety and vertue, administred by the grace and guidance of God's Holy Spirit, maintained and propagated by meek instruction, by vertuous example, by hearty devotion and humble patience; rewarding its loyal subjects with spiritual joys and consolations here, with endless rest and blifs hereafter; no other kingdom could he be presumed to design, who submitted to this dolorous and disgraceful way of suffering; no other exploits could he pretend to atchieve by expiring on a Cross, no other way could he govern who gave himself up to be managed by the will of his enemies; no other benefits would that forlorn case allow him to dispense; so that well might he assert, *My kingdom is not of this world*, when he was going in this signal manner to demonstrate that great truth. It was a touch-stone to prove mens disposition, and to discriminate the ingenuous, well-disposed, humble and sober persons, who would entertain our Lord's heavenly doctrine with acceptance, notwithstanding these disadvantages, *not being offended in him*, from those perverse, vain, proud, profane people, who being scandalized at his adversity would reject him.

Another advantage was this, that by it God's special providence was discovered, and his glory illustrated in the propagation of the Gospel, for how could it be, that a person of so low parentage, of so mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent so woful and despicable a kind of death, falling under the pride and spite of his adversaries, should so easily gain so general an opinion in the world (among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons) of being *the Lord of life and glory*; How, I say, could it be, that such a miracle should be effected without God's aid and special concurrence? that *Herod*, who from a long reign in a flourishing state, with prosperous success in his undertakings, got the name of *Great*; or that *Vespasian*, who triumphantly did ascend the Imperial throne, should either of them by a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously or in flattery, be deemed the *Messias*, is not so very strange; but that one who so miserably was trampled on, and treated as a wretched caitiffe, should instantly conquer innumerable hearts, and from such a depth of extreme adversity should attain the sublimest pitch of glory; that *the stone, which the builders with so much scorn did refuse, should become the head stone of the corner, this* (with good assurance we may say) *is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes*. It may well be so, and thereby the excellency of divine power and wisdom was much glorified; by so impotent, so implausible and improbable means, accomplishing so great effects; subduing the world to his obedience, not by the active valour of an illustrious *Heroe*, but thro' the penitent submission of a poor, abused and oppressed person; restoring Mankind to life by the death of a crucified Saviour.

Again, this kind of suffering to the devout *Fathers* did seem many ways significant, or full of instructive and admonitive emblems; being a rich and large field, for a devout fancy to range with affectionate meditation.

His posture on the Cross might represent unto us that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth his arms of kindness, pity and mercy, with them as it were to embrace the world, receiving all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection.

It might exhibit him as earnestly woeing, and intreating us to return unto God, accepting the reconciliation which he then was purchasing, and did then offer to us: *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*, said God of old, doing it then mediately and figurately by his Prophets, but he did so now immediately

Rom. 14.

John 18. 36.

Chryl. Tom. 6.
Or. 61.

Psal. 118. 22.

2 Cor. 4. 7.
1 Cor. 1. 27.Extendit in
passione manus
suas, &c.
Lact. IV. p.
437.

Isa. 65. 2.

diately and properly by himself; the Cross being as a Pulpit, from which our Lord God *blest for ever*, did himself in person earnestly preach the overtures of grace, did exhort to repentance, did tender the remission of sin, with action most pathetic and affecting.

Levit. 9. 22.

2 Chr. 4. 1.

Chryl. Tom. 6.

Or. 82.

Quod unquam

sacrificium

sacratius fu-

it, quam quod

verus Ponti-

fex altari

crucis per im-

molationem

sua carnis

imposuit? Leo

M. Ep. 83.

Luke 18. 4.

Matt. 23. 12.

1 Pet. 5. 5.

Jam. 4. 10.

Phil. 2. 8, 9.

His assent to the Cross might set forth his discharging that high office of universal High-Priest for all Ages, and all People; the Cross being an Altar, whereon he did offer up his own flesh, and pour forth his blood, as a pure and perfect sacrifice, propitiating God and expiating the sins of mankind.

His elevation thither may suggest to our thoughts, that submission to God's will, suffering for truth and righteousness, the exercises of humility and patience are conjoined with exaltation, do qualify for, and in effect procure true preferment; so that the lower we stoop in humility, the higher we shall rise in favour with God, the nearer we shall approach to heaven, the surer we shall be of God's blessing, according to that *Aphorism* of our Lord, *Whoever humbleth himself shall be exalted*. The Cross was a Throne, whereon humility and patience did sit in high state and glorious Majesty, advanced above all worldly pride and insolence; It was a great step, a sure assent unto the celestial throne of dignity superlative; for because our Lord *was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, therefore did God far exalt him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth*, as S. Paul doth teach us.

O the fallacy of humane sense! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auspicious, or more happy than this event which had so dismal an aspect, and provoked so contemptuous scorn in some, so grievous pity in others; The Devil thought he had done bravely, when he had by his suggestions brought the Son of God into this case; the World supposed it self highly prosperous in its attempts against him; but O how blind and foolish is malice, which then doth most hurt it self, when it triumpheth in the mischief which it doeth to others! How impotent is wickedness, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greatest success? for by thus striving to debase our Lord, they most highly did advance him; by thus crossing our salvation they most effectually did promote it.

Farther, looking up to the Cross may admonish us how our salvation is acquired, and whence it doth proceed; not by casting our eyes downward, not from any thing that lyeth upon earth; but *our help cometh from above*, our salvation is attained by looking upwards; we must lift up our eyes to behold our Saviour procuring it, we must raise up our hearts to derive it from him.

Our Lord's crucifixion may also intimate to us, how our flesh must be dealt with, and to what usage we must submit it; for we must not only imitate our Saviour in his holy life, but in some manner should resemble him in his gasty death; being (as S. Paul speaketh) *conformable to his death*, and *planted together with him in the likeness of it*; mortifying our earthly members, crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts; having our old man crucified together with Christ, *that the body of sin may be destroyed*. His death may fitly shadow our death to sin, his grievous pain the bitterness of our repentance, wherein our souls should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails; his shame that confusion of mind, which regard to our offences should produce within us.

Συμμορφώ-

μασι τῷ

Θαυμάτι

αὐτοῦ.

Phil. 3. 10.

Rom. 6. 5.

Gal. 2. 20.

5. 24.

Col. 3. 5.

Rom. 8. 13.

Passio ipsa per

se acerba &

amara specimen

nobis futuro-

rum tormento-

rum dabat,

quam in hoc sa-

culo moranti-

bus virtus ip-

sa proponit—

Lact. lib. 4.

* 1 The. 3. 3.

† Rom. 8. 29.

Acts 14. 22.

2 Tim. 3. 12.

Reflecting on him we may also discern our state here; wherein, if we will be truly and thoroughly virtuous, we must be exposed to envy and hatred, to censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to affliction and hardship; Every good man must hang on some cross; *his sūm zelusda*, * *We are*, saith S. Paul, *appointed to this*, 'tis our lot and portion assigned to us by divine immutable decree; being *† predestinated to a conformity with this image of God's son*. *We must*, as he did, *by many tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God*; *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall certainly suffer persecution*, one way or other partaking of his

** 1 The. 3. 3. † Rom. 8. 29.* Divers such analogies and resemblances devout meditation might extract from this matter, suggesting practical truths, and exciting good affections in us.

V. We may (for the confirmation of our faith and begetting in us a due adoration of the divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient Prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshewing it.

That

That most famous, clear and complete Prophecy concerning the passion, do h
 expresse him suffering as a malefactor (*he was reckoned among the transgressors*) suf- Isa. 53. 12. 5.
 fering in a manner very painful (*he was wounded for our transgressions, and brui-* Mark 15. 28.
sed for our iniquities) suffering in a most ignominious way (*he was despised, and re-*
jected of men, as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief) which circumstances
 could scarce so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering, or punishment
 then used, as to this.

In the 22d Psalm, the Royal Prophet describeth an afflicted and forlorn condi-
 tion, such as by no passages in the story concerning him doth in the full extent,
 and according to the literal signification of his words, appear suitable to his person,
 which therefore is more properly to be accommodated unto the *Messias*, whom he
 did represent; and in that description, among other passages agreeing to our Lord,
 these words do occur, *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; for dogs have* Psalm 22. 19;
compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and 16.
my feet; which words how patly and livelily do they set out our Saviour's being
 nailed to the cross, and treated in that cruel, and in that shameful way by his ma-
 licious adversaries?

In the Prophet *Zechariah*, God speaking in his own name, *They* (namely some
 of the *Jews*, being sensible of what they had acted, and penitently affected for
 it, they) *shall look upon me whom they have pierced*; which words need no vio- Zech. 10. 20.
 lence to wring from them the right meaning, no comment to explain them, in John 19. 37.
 accommodation to that matter, to which the *Evangelists* do apply them, and to
 which they are so literally congruous.

The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types. *Isaac*, the immediate heir Gen. 22.
 of the promise, in whom the faithful seed was called and conveyed down, and so Rom. 9. 8.
 a most apt type of our Saviour, being devoted and offered up to God, did him- Jam. 2. 21.
 self bear the wood by which he was to be offered; So did our Saviour, the promis- Heb. 11. 17.
 ed seed, in whom all nations should be blessed, himself bear the cross by which he
 was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God.

Those who were dangerously bitten by fiery Serpents, were, by looking upon Tert. c. Jude
 a brazen Serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life, which (according to most au- cap. 10.
 thentick exposition) did represent the salvation, which should proceed from our
 beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross to us, who had been
 mortally struck and stung by that old Serpent's poisonous insinuations.

The Paschal Lamb was a most congruous emblem of *Christ our passover* (that 1 Pet.
 most innocent and meek, unblemished and spotless Lamb, slain for the sins of the
 world.) It was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of *Israel*,
 its blood was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its
 body was not to be eaten raw, nor sodden with water, but roasted whole, and Exod. 12. 9;
 dressed upon a spit; nor were any of its bones to be broken; which circumstances, 6, 9, 46.
 with so exact caution and care prescribed, how they justly sute and fitly adumbrate
 this manner of our Saviour's passion, I need not otherwise than by the bare men-
 tion of them declare; every one easily being able to compare and adapt them.

VI. Lastly, the consideration of our Lord's thus suffering is applicable to our
 practice; being most apt to instruct and affect us; admonishing us of our duty,
 and exciting us to a conscionable performance thereof: No contemplation indeed
 is more fruitful, or more efficacious toward the sanctification of our hearts and
 lives, than this of the cross; For what good affection may not the meditation on
 it kindle? What vertue may it not breed and cherish in us?

1. How can it otherwise than enflame our heart with love toward our Lord, to
 think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of shame he did willingly undertake,
 and gladly endure for us? No imagination can devise a greater expression of cha- John 15. 13.
 rity and friendship; and if love naturally is productive of love, if friendship me- Eph. 5. 2, 25.
 riteth a correspondence in kindness, What effect should the consideration of such Gal. 2. 20.
 ineffable love, of so incomparable friendship have upon us? Apoc. 1. 5.
 Eph. 3. 19.

2. How can a reflection on this case otherwise than work hearty gratitude in us?
 Suppose any person for our sake (that he might rescue us from the greatest mis-
 chiefs, and purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should deprive himself
 of all his estate, his honour, his ease and pleasure, should expose himself to ex-
 tremest hazards, should endure the forest pains, and most disgraceful ignominies
 should prostitute his life, and lose it in the most hideous manner: Should we not
 then

then be monstrously ingrateful if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment, and all the requital we were able? the case in regard to our Lord is the same in kind, but in degree whatever we can suppose doth infinitely fall below the performances for us of him who stooped from the top of heaven; who laid aside the felicity and Majesty of God, for the sorrows and infamies of the Cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and procure to us the joys of heaven; so that our obligation to gratitude is unexpressibly great, and we are extremely unworthy if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable.

3. What surer ground of faith in God, or stronger encouragement of hope can there be, than is hence afforded to us? for *if God spared not his own son, but delivered him up for our sake* to the suffering of these bitter pains and contumelies; How can we in any case distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy? *How, as S. Paul argueth, shall he not also with him freely give us all things*; What higher favour could God express, what lower condescension could he shew; how more plainly or surely could he testify his willingness and his delight to do us good, than by ordering the Son of his love to undergo these most grievous things for us? How consequently could there be laid a stronger foundation of our hope, and entire confidence in God?

4. What greater engagement (in general) can there be to obedience, than to consider how readily and cheerfully our Lord did submit to the will of God, in bearing the most heavy yoke that could be imposed on him, in drinking the most bitter cup that could be tempered for him: how that he *did humble himself, being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*? How dearly did he purchase his property in us, and dominion over us?

What detestation of our sins must the serious consideration of this event produce in us? of our sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches on our blessed Redeemer. *Judas* the wretch who betray'd him; the *Jewish Priests* who did accuse and prosecute him; the wicked rout which abused and insulted over him; those cruel hands that smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorn'd him, those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled him; all those, who any-wise were instruments or abettors of his affliction; How do we loath them? How do we detest and curse their memories? But how much greater reason have we to abominate our sins, which were the principal causes of all that woful tragedy? *He was delivered for our offences*, they were indeed the traitors, which by the hands of *Judas* delivered him up: *He that knew no sin was made sin for us*; that is, was accused, was condemned, was executed as a sinner for us; it was therefore we who by our sins did impeach him, the spiteful *Priests* were but our advocates; we by them did adjudge and sentence him, *Pilate* (against his will and conscience) was but our spokesman; we by them did inflict that horrid punishment on him, the *Roman Executioners* were but our agents therein. *He became a curse for us*, that is, all the mockery, derision and contumely he endured did proceed from us; the silly people were but properties, acting our parts; our sins were they that cried out *crucifige*, (*crucifige him, crucifige him*) with clamours more loud and more effectual, than did all the *Jewish* rabble; it was they, which by the borrowed throats of that base people, did so outrageously persecute him; *He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*; it was they which by the hands of the fierce soldiers and of the rude populacy, as by senseless engines, did buffet and scourge him; they by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh, and rend his sacred body; upon them therefore it is most just and fit that we should turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indignation.

5. And what in reason can be more powerful to the breeding in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins? How can we but earnestly grieve, when we consider our selves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the murderers of a person so innocent and lovely, of one so great and glorious, of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of our own best friend, and most kind Saviour?

6. If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby melt us into contrition, yet surely this consideration must needs produce some fear within us: For can we at least otherwise than tremble to think upon the heinous guilt of our sins, upon

upon the fierceness of God's wrath against them, upon the severity of divine judgment for them, all so manifestly discovered, all so lively set forth in this dismal spectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in us some terror, some dread of the Law, some reverence toward Authority, What awful impressions should this singular example of divine justice work upon us? How greatly we should be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the most inanimate creatures: The whole World did seem affected therewith with horror; the frame of things was disturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it; the Sun (as out of aversion, or shame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackness; the bowels of the earth did yern and quake; the rocks were rent; the veil of the Temple was torn quite through; graves did open, and the bodies did wake: And can we (who are most concerned) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsie than buried carcases, the most insensible and immoveable things in nature?

7. How also can it but hugely deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider, that by it we do (as the *Apostle* teacheth) *re-crucify the Son of God*, and again *expose him to open shame*; bringing upon the stage, and acting over all that direful Tragedy; renewing (as to our guilt) all that pain, and that disgrace to him; that we thereby (as he telleth us) do *trample upon the Son of God*, and *prize* the blood of the covenant (that most sacred and precious blood, so freely shed for the demonstration of God's mercy, and the ratification of his gracious intentions toward us) as a common thing; of no special worth, or consideration with us; despising all his so kind and painful endeavours for our salvation, defeating his most gracious purposes and earnest desires for our welfare; rendring all his so bitter and loathsome sufferings, in regard to us, altogether vain and fruitless; yea indeed hurtful and pernicious; for if the cross do not save us from our sins, it will sorely aggravate their guilt, and augment their punishment; bringing a severer condemnation, and a sadder ruin on us.

8. It may also yield great consolation and joy to us, to contemplate our Lord upon the cross, expressing his immense goodness and charity toward us; transacting our redemption; expiating our sins, and sustaining our miseries; combating and defeating all the adversaries of our salvation.

Is it not comfortable and pleasant to behold him there standing erect, not only as a resolute sufferer, but as a glorious conqueror; where *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a solemn shew, triumphing over them*? No Conqueror loftily seated in his triumphal chariot did ever yield a spectacle so gallant or magnificent; no tree was ever adorned with trophies so pompous or precious: to the external view and carnal sense of men our Lord was then exposed to scorn and shame; but to spiritual and true discerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up as objects of contempt, quite overthrown and undone: there the Devil, that strong and sturdy one did hang bound and fettered, disarmed and spoiled, utterly baffled and confounded; there death it self hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled; his death having prevented ours, and purchased immortality for us. There the world with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its fondly admired excellencies, its bewitching pleasures, did hang up all disparaged and defaced; as it appeared to S. Paul, *God forbid (said he) that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*. There our sins, those sins, which (as S. Peter saith) our Saviour did carry up unto the gibbet, did hang, as marks of his victorious prowess, as objects of our horror and hatred, as malefactors by him condemned in the flesh. There that manifold enmity (enmity between God and man, between one man and another, between man and his own self or conscience) did hang abolished in his flesh, and slain upon the cross; by the blood whereof he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth. The blood of the cross was the cement, joining the parts of the world: There together with all our enemies did hand all those causes of woe and misery to us, those yokes of bondage, those instruments of vexation, those hard laws, which did so much burthen and encumber men, did set them at such distance and variance, did so far subject them to guilt and condemnation; all that *bond of ordinances*, inducing our obligation to

Ἀνασταύω.
Heb. 6. 6.

Heb. 10. 29.

Col. 2. 15.

Matt. 12.

Luke 11.

Heb. 2. 14.

1 Cor. 15. 54.

1 Tim. 1. 10.

Ἀνέστηναι,

ὅτι τὸ εὐλογεῖν

1 Pet. 2. 24.

Rom. 8. 3.

Col. 1. 10.

Eph. 2. 15,

16.

Col. 2. 14. so grievous forfeitures and penalties, was nailed to the cross, being cancelled and expunged by our Saviour's performances there.

9. This consideration is a strong inducement to the practice of charity toward our neighbour: for can we forbear to love those, toward whom our Lord bore such tender affection, for whom he did sustain so woful tortures and indignities? Shall we not in obedience to his most urgent commands, in conformity to his most notable example, in grateful return to him for his benefits, who thus did suffer for us, discharge this most sweet and easie duty toward his beloved friends? Shall we not comport with an infirmity, or bear a petty neglect, or forgive a small injury to our brother, whenas our Lord did bear a cross for us, and from us, obtaining pardon for our numberless most heinous affronts and offences against God? 'Tis S. Paul's reasoning, *We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak — for even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me.* Can we hear our Lord say, *This is my command, that ye love one another, as I have loved you;* and, *Hereby shall all men know, that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another?* Can we hear S. Paul exhorting, *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour?* Can we consider S. John's arguing, *Beloved, if God so loved us, then ought we also to love one another;* *Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren?* Can, I say, we consider such discourses, without being disposed to comply with them for the sake of our crucified Saviour; all whose life and death were nothing else but one continual recommendation and enforcement of this duty?

10. Farthermore, What can be more operative than this consideration, toward breeding a disregard of this world with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous delights, toward reconciling our minds to the worst condition, it can bring us into, toward supporting our hearts under the heaviest pressures of affliction it can lay upon us; How can we refuse, in submission to God's pleasure, to bear contentedly a slight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore a cross infinitely more grievous to carnal will and sense, than any that can befall us? Can we expect, can we affect, can we desire great prosperity, when as the Son of God, our Lord and Master did only taste such adversity? Who can admire those splendid trifles which our Lord did never regard in his life, which at his death did only serve to mock and abuse him? Who can relish those sordid pleasures, of which he living did not vouchsafe to taste, and the contraries whereof he dying chose to feel in all extremity? Who will dare to vilify, to disdain, to reject a state of sorrow, or disgrace, which he by a voluntary susception of it hath so dignified and graced; by which we resemble, and become conformable to him; by which we concur and partake with him: yea by which we may promote, and in a sort complete his designs; *filling up (as S. Paul speaketh) that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh?* Who now can much prefer being esteemed, applauded, approved or favoured by men, before infamy, reproach, derision or persecution from them, especially when these do follow conscientious adherence to righteousness? Who can be very ambitious of worldly honour, or repute, covetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who observeth the only Son of God chusing rather to hang upon a cross, than to sit upon a throne; inviting the clamours of spite and scorn, rather than acclamations of blessing and praise, divesting himself of all secular pomp, plenty, conveniences and solaces; embracing the garb of a slave, and the repute of a malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a Prince, which were his due, and which he easily could have obtained? Can we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and prosperous in this world, to swim here in affluence and pleasure; can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants or straits here, seeing the fountain of all happiness did himself condescend to so forlorn a state, and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer? If with the eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groaning under extream anguish of pain, encompassed with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding (as the Prophet foretold of him) his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, bidding not his face from shame and spitting;* will not the imagination of such a sight dim

Rom. 8. 17.

Phil. 3. 10.

Apoc. 1. 9.

1 Pet. 4. 13.

Col. 1. 24.

Ἀσπασάντων

πρὸς τὰ ὄντα

μᾶλλον.

Cogitemus crucem ejus, &

divitias lutum

putabimus.

Hier. Ep. 2.

(ad Nepot.)

Quis beatam

vitam esse arbitretur in his,

qua contemenda esse docuit

filius Dei?

Aug. de Ag.

Ch. 6. 15.

Isa. 50.

dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all the glee which we can find in any wild frolicks, or riotous merriments?

11. It is surely a great commendation of afflictions, and a strong consolation under them to ponder well this point; for if hardship was to our Lord a school of duty, *he* (as the *Apostle* saith) *learning obedience from what he suffered*; if it was to him an instrument of perfection, as the same *Apostle* implyeth, when he ^{Εμαρτυρῶ} saith, *that it became God to perfect the Captain of our salvation by suffering*; if it ^{ἡ ἐκείνου} was a means of procuring the divine favour even to him, as those words import, ^{ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ} *Therefore the Father loveth me, because I lay down my life*; if it was to him a step ^{ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ} unto glory, according to that saying, *Was not Christ to suffer, and so to enter into his glory?* yea if it was a ground of conferring on him that sublimest pitch of dignity above all creatures as we are taught; for *because* (saith *S. Paul*) *he was obedient to death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name*; and, *We see Jesus* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour*; and, *worthy* (cryeth out the heavenly society in the *Revelations*) *is the Lamb that was slain* (and who ^{ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ} deemed us to God by his blood) *to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*: ^{Rom. 5. 3. Col. 1. 24. Matt. 5. 12. Luke 6. 23. Phil. 1. 29. Acts 5. 41. Jam. 1. 2. Heb. 10. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Heb. 12. 1 Cor. 1. 4.} If affliction did minister such advantages to him; and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it with like submission, humility and patience, it may afford the like to us, what reason can there be that we should any-wise be discomposed, discouraged or disconsolate under it: much more reason surely there is, that with *S. Paul*, and all the Holy *Apostles*, we should boast, rejoice and exult in our tribulations; far more cause we have with them to esteem it a favour, a privilege, and an ornament to us, than to be discontented, or displeased therewith. To do thus is a duty incumbent on us as Christians; for *He* (saith our *Master*) *that doth not take up his cross and follow me, is not worthy of me*; ^{Luke 14. 27. 9. 23.} *He that doth not carry his cross, and go after me, cannot be my disciple*: ^{Matt. 10. 38. 16. 24.} He that doth not willingly take the Cross, when it is presented to him by God's hand, he that doth not contentedly bear it, when it is by providence imposed on him, is no-wise worthy of the honour to wait on Christ, he is not capable to be reckoned among the disciples of our heavenly Master; He is not worthy of Christ, as not having the courage, the constancy, the sincerity required of a Christian; of one pretending to such great benefits, such high privileges, such excellent rewards, as Christ our Lord and Saviour doth propose; ^{Matt. 11. 29.} He cannot be Christ's disciple, shewing such incapacity to learn those needful ^{ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ} lessons of humility and patience dictated by him; declaring such an indisposition ^{ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ} to transcribe those copies of submission to divine will, self-denial and self-resignation so fairly set him by the instruction and example of Christ: *For as much then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind*: And, *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps*, saith *S. Peter*. ^{1 Pet. 4. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 21.}

12. The willing susception, and the chearful sustenance of the cross is indeed the express condition, and the proper character of our Christianity; in signification whereof it hath been from immemorial time a constant usage to mark those who enter into it with the figure of the cross. The cross, as the instrument, by which our peace with God was wrought, as the stage whereon our Lord did act the last part of his miraculous obedience, consummating our redemption; as the field, wherein the *Captain of our salvation* did achieve his noble victory, and erect his glorious trophies over all the enemies thereof, was well assumed to be the badge of our profession, the ensign of our spiritual warfare, the pledge of our constant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in relation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our great joy and sole glory doth consist; for *God forbid*, ^{ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ} saith *S. Paul*, *that I should glory save in the cross of Christ*. ^{Gal. 6. 14.}

Let it be to the *Jews* a scandal, or offensive to their fancy prepossessed with expectations of a *Messias* flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity; let it be *folly* to the *Greeks*; or seem absurd to men imbued (puff'd up, corrupted) with fleshly notions and maxims of worldly craft, disposing men to value nothing, which is not grateful to present sense or fancy; that God should put his own most beloved Son into so very sad and despicable a condition; that salvation from death

Orig. in Cell.
lib. 2. p. 79.

and misery should be procured by so miserable a death; that eternal joy, glory and happiness should issue from these fountains of extream sorrow and shame; that a person in external semblance, devoted to so opprobrious and slavish usage, should be the Lord and Redeemer of Mankind, the King and Judge of all the World: Let this doctrine, I say, be scandalous and distastful to some persons tainted with prejudice, let it appear strange and incredible to others blinded with self-conceit; let all the proud, all the profane, all the inconsiderate part of mankind slight and reject it; yet to us it must appear grateful and joyous; to us, it is *πιστός λόγος*, a faithful (and credible) proposition, worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world thus to save sinners; to us, who discern by a clearer light, and are endued with a purer sense, kindled by the divine spirit; from whence with comfortable satisfaction of mind we may apprehend and taste, that God could not in a higher measure, or a fitter manner illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness and justice; his infinite grace and mercy toward his poor creatures; his holy displeasure against wickedness; his impartial severity in punishing iniquity and impiety; or in vindicating his own honour and authority; than by thus ordering his Son to suffer for us; that also true virtue and goodness could not otherwise be taught, be exemplified, be commended and impressed with greater advantage.

Grot. de Ver.
4. 12.

Plat. de Rep. 2. (p. 594.)

Magnum exemplum, nisi mala fortuna non invenit. — Sen. de Prov. 3.

Plut. de Stoic. contr. p. 1931.

Socrates, Phocion, Thraceas, Arillides, &c.

Vid. Ælian. Var. 11. 9. 2. 43.

wisdom, who were tryed in this furnace, and thereby shone most brightly; their suffering by the iniquity and ingratitude, by the envy and malignity of their times in their reputation, liberty and life; their undergoing foul slanders, infamous punishments, and ignominious deaths, more than any other practices of their life, recommending them to the regard and admiration of future ages; although none of them, as our Lord, did suffer of choice, or upon design to advance the interests of goodness, but upon constraint, and irresistible force put on them; none of them did suffer in a manner so signal, with circumstances so rare, and with events so wonderful; yet suffering as they did was their chief glory;

Cicuta Socratem magnum fecit, &c. Sen. Ep. 13. & 67, & 104.

Sen. Ep. 81. Ep. 113.

Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret, nisi accepisset injuriam; dum violatur effulgit. Sen. Ep. 79.

whence it seemeth, that even according to the sincerest dictates of common wisdom this dispensation was not so unaccountable; nor ought the *Greeks* in consistency with themselves, and in respect to their own admired Philosophy, to have deemed our doctrine of the cross, foolish, or unreasonable.

To conclude; since thereby a charity and humanity so unparallel'd (far transcending theirs who have been celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to their Country, or kindness to their friends) a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical were manifested for the instruction and direction of men: Since never were the vices and the vanities of the world (so prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) so remarkably disparaged; since never any suffering could pretend to so worthy and beneficial effects; the expiation of the whole worlds sin, and reconciliation of mankind to God, such as no performance beside, nor any other sacrifice did ever aim to procure, since, in fine, no virtue had ever so glorious rewards, or Sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, and eternal happiness to those who imitate it: Since, I say, there be such excellent uses, and fruits of the cross born by our *Blessed Saviour*, we can have no reason to be offended at it, or ashamed of it; but with all reason heartily we should approve, and humbly adore as well the deep wisdom of God, as all other his glorious attributes, illustriously displayed therein; to whom therefore as is most due let us devoutly render all thanks, all praise and glory.

And,

And, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever, Amen.

Dead and Buried.

S E R M O N XXVII.

1 COR. XV. 3.

For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.



SAINT Paul meaning in this Chapter to maintain a very fundamental Point of our Religion (the resurrection of the dead) against some Infidels or Hereticks, who among the Corinthians, his scholars in the faith, did oppose it; doth, in order to the proof of his assertion, and refutation of that pernicious error, premise those doctrines, which he having received both from the relation of the other Apostles, and by immediate revelation from God himself, had delivered unto them, *is witness, in the first place*, or among the prime things; that is as most eminent and important points of Christian doctrine; the truths whereof consequently (standing upon the same foundations with Christianity it self, upon Divine Revelation, and Apostolical testimony) could no-wise be disputed of, or doubted by any good Christian. Of which doctrines (the collection of which he styleth *the Gospel*; that Gospel, by embracing and retaining which, they were, he saith, *to be saved*) the first is that in our Text, concerning the death of our Lord, undergone by him for our salvation: which point as of all others in our Religion it is of peculiar consequence, so it much concerneth us both firmly to believe it, and well to understand it; for it is by faith in his blood that we are justified, and by knowing Christ crucified we shall be chiefly edified; the word imparting this knowledge being *the power of God to salvation*. It therefore I mean now, by God's assistance, to explain and apply; the which I shall do generally and absolutely; without any particular accommodation of my discourse to the words of this Text; yet so as to comprehend all the particulars observable in them. The death of our Lord then is my subject, and about it I shall consider, 1. Its nature, or wherein it did consist. 2. Some peculiar adjuncts and respects thereof, which commend it to our regard, and render it considerable to us. 3. The principles and (impressive and meritorious) causes thereof. 4. The ends which it aimed at; together with the fruits and effects of it. 5. Some practical influences, which the consideration thereof may, and should have upon us.

1. As for the nature of it we must affirm, and believe assuredly, that it was a true and proper death; in kind not different from that death, to the which all we mortal creatures are by the law and condition of our nature subject, and which we must all some time undergo; for, *What man is he that liveth and shall not see death; that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? that death*, which is signified by cessation from vital operations (of all motions natural, or voluntary, of all sense and knowledge, appetite and passion) *that death*, which is caused by violent disunion, or dislocation, by distemperring, or however indisposing the parts,

Rom. 3. 24.
1 Cor. 2. 2.
Rom. 1. 16.
Phil. 3.
10.

Psal. 89. 48.

parts, humours, spirits of the body, so that the soul can no longer in them and by them continue to exercise those functions, for which its conjunction thereto was intended, and cannot therefore fitly reside therein; *that death*, which is supposed to consist in the dissolution of that vital band, whatever it be, whereby the soul is link'd and united to the body; or in that which is thereupon consequent, the separation, department and absence of the soul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home

—'Επειτα πρὸς τὴν αἰσθητικὴν οὐσίαν
 τοῦ σώματος,
 ὡς αὐτὸς ἐννοεῖται ἐν τῇ ἀποκάλυψιν πρὸς τὴν
 ἰαυ.
 Hom. Odyss. λ.

Gen. 3. 19. to their original principles as it were; the body *to the earth from whence it was taken*, and the spirit unto God who gave it. Such causes antecedent are specified in the story; such signs following are plainly implied, such a state is expressed in the very terms, whereby our death is commonly signified; the same extremity of anguish, the same dilaceration of parts, the same effusion of blood, which would destroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, stop our animal motions, exhaust our spirits, and force out our breath, did work upon him; necessarily producing the like effects on him, as who had assumed the common imperfections and infirmities of our nature; in regard to which violences inflicted upon him, he is said, ἀποκτείναντες *to be killed or slain*; διακρινέντες, *to be dispatched*, ἀναγκάσαντες, *to be made away*, ἀπολλύντες, *to perish*, or be destroyed; ἐξολοθύναντες, *to be cut off* (as it is in Daniel) ἐφάρθεν, *to be slaughtered*; θύσαντες, *to be sacrificed*; which words do all of them fully import a real and proper death to have ensued upon those violent usages toward him.

And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to sense, the soldiers judg'd him dead, and therefore, ὡς ἔδειξεν ἡμῶν τοὺς πόδας, *seeing him already dead, they forbore to break his legs*; by the same all the World was satisfy'd thereof, both his spiteful enemies, that stood with delight, waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him, and his loving friends, who with compassionate respect attended upon him through the course of his suffering; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness, in procuring a decent interment of his body.

His transition also, and abiding in this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death: S. Mark telleth us, that ἐξέπνευσεν, *animam efflavit*, he expired, breathed out his soul, or his last breath; S. Matthew ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *animam egit*, he let go his spirit, or gave up the ghost; S. John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he delivered up his spirit* into God's hand; the which Saint Luke expresseth done with a formal resignation, *Father, said he, into thy hands I commend* (or I dispose) *my spirit*; he doth also himself frequently express his dying by *laying down his life*, and bestowing it as a ransom, which sheweth him really to have parted with it.

His death also (as ours is wont to be denoted by like phrases) is termed ἔκθεσις, *excessus à vivis*, a going out of life, or from the society of men (for Moses and Elias are said to tell, τὴν ἔκθεσιν αὐτοῦ, *his decease*, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem) and παράστασις, a passing over, or translation from this into another world (When, saith S. John, Jesus knew that his time was come, ἵνα μὴ ἀπέλθῃ, *that he should depart from this world*.) His death also was enigmatically described by the destruction, or demolition of his bodily Temple, answerable to those circumlocutions concerning our ordinary death; *the dissolution of our earthly house or tabernacle*, or transitory abode, in S. Paul, the ἀφέντες τὸ σκηνώματι, *laying down*, or putting off our tabernacle, in S. Peter.

It were also not hard to shew, how all other phrases and circumlocutions, by which humane death is expressed, either in Holy Scripture, or in usual language, or among Philosophers, and more accurate speakers, are either expressly applied, or by consequence are plainly applicable to the death of our Saviour, such for instance as these in Scripture; ἀπολύντες, being resolved into our principles, or the returning of them thither whence they came; ἀπαλλάττειν, a being freed, licensed, or dismissed hence; ἐκδημιόω, a going, or abode abroad; a peregrination, or absentment from the body; ἀνατίθειν, putting off, or being divested of the body; ἀφανισμός, disappearance, or cessation in appearance to be; a going hence, and not being seen; a falling on sleep, resting from our labours, sleeping with our fathers,

1 Tim. 4. 6.
 Phil. 1. 23.
 Luke 2. 29.
 2 Cor. 5. 8.
 Acts 13. 36.

fathers, being added, and gathered to our fathers; being taken, or cut off out of the land of the living; going down into the pit; lying down, resting, sleeping in the dust; making our bed in darkness: these and the like phrases occurring in Scripture (which might be parallell'd out of vulgar speech, and out of

Gen. 25. 8. 49. 33. &c. Psal. 39. 13. 52. 5. 28. 1. 143. 7. 88. 4. Jer. 11. 19. 11a. 38. 18. 26. 19. Ezek. 26. 20. Dan. 12. 12. Job 7. 21. 17. 16. 20. 11. 21. 26. 17. 13.

learned discourses) describing either the entrance into, or the abiding in the state of that death, to which all men are obnoxious, might easily be shewed applicable to the death of our Saviour. His resurrection doth imply the reality of his death; for otherwise it had not been miraculous, it had not been a pledge of our resurrection. But I will not farther needlessly insist upon explicating, or confirming a point so clear, and never misunderstood, or question'd, except by some wild and presumptuous Hereticks.

• Our Saviour's death then was a true, real and proper death, futable to that frail, passible and mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undergo for us, to the condition of *sinful flesh, in the likeness whereof he did appear*; severing his soul and body, and remitting them to their original sources; his passion was indeed *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme capital punishment, the highest in the last result, which in this world either the fiercest injustice, or the severest justice could inflict: for, *to kill the body* is (as our Lord himself taught) the utmost limit of all humane power and malice; the most and worst that man can do; they have not any thing beyond that which they can attempt upon us; and so far did they proceed with our Lord. Such was the nature of his death; such indeed as was requisite for the accomplishment of the ends and effects designed thereby.

Rom. 8. 3.

Matt. 10. 28. Luke 12. 4.

2. Let us now consider those peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death (together with his whole passion, whereof his death was the chief part, and final completion) the which do commend it to our regard, and amplify the worth thereof: such are, 1. Its being a result of God's eternal resolution and decree. 2. Its being a matter of free consent and compact between God the Father and his only Son. 3. Its being anciently prefigured and predicted. 4. Its being executed by God's hand and providence guiding and governing it; and by man's action concurring. 5. Its being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so high and excellent, of God's Son, of God the Son.

1. It was a result of God's eternal counsel and decree; it was no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised, or slipt from providence, but a well-laid design, from all eternity contrived by divine wisdom, resolved upon by divine goodness. As God did (by the incomprehensible perfection of his nature) from thence foresee our lapse, and misery, so he did as soon determine our remedy and means of salvation. As the whole of that mysterious dispensation concerning Christ, so especially did this main part thereof proceed *ex æternitate*, according to an eternal purpose (as S. Paul speaketh;) for our Saviour was a *Lamb slain* (in Eph. 3. 1. designation irrevocably slain) from the foundation of the world; as it is said in the Revelation: And, we (saith S. Peter) were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, *pre-ordained* indeed before the foundation of the world. And our Saviour went (as he telleth us himself) to suffer, according to what was determined; and, It was by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God (saith S. Peter) that he was delivered up into those wicked hands that slew him; nor did the conspiracy of Herod and Pilate, with the nation and people of the Jews effect any thing about it, beyond whatever the hand and counsel of God (or God's effectual purpose) had predetermined to come to pass. Such an especial care, and providence of God, concerning this matter, so expressly and so frequently recommended to our observation, do argue the very great moment and high worth thereof. What God declareth himself to have had so early, and earnest a care of, must be matter of highest consideration and importance.

Afts 2. 23. 4.

2. It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and his Son. God did freely and graciously (out of merciful regard to our welfare) proffer, that if he would please to undertake to redeem his (lost and enslaved) creature an honourable and comfortable success to his enterprise; that he would accept his performances, and that the design should prosper in his hand; he did willingly embrace the proposal, and applyed himself to the performance: *When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, thou shalt see thy seed, and prolong thy days,* and

Isa. 53. 9. 10.

and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand; thou shalt see of the travel of thy soul, and shalt be satisfied; that, in the Prophet's language was God's proposition; and, *Lo I come to do thy will O God*; that was our Saviour's reply in correspondence and consent thereto. God, in consideration of what our Lord would obediently suffer, did (as our Saviour telleth us) *Davidicus Cancellus*, covenant to him a kingdom; committing a sovereign authority, assigning an universal dominion to him; in virtue of which transaction it was, that *Jesuw for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour*; that, because he poured out his soul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great; that, he being obedient to the death, God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names. In this regard are God's elect and faithful people said to be given unto him as a retribution to him, who gave himself for them, (*Thine they were*, saith our Lord to his Father, and thou gavest them me;) hence are we said to be bought with a price; hence is the Church purchased by his blood; there was therefore a covenant and bargain driven between God and his Son concerning this affair; and of huge consideration surely must that affair be, wherein such persons do so deeply interest themselves, trafficking, and (as it were) standing upon terms with one another.

3. That the great excellency and efficacy of our Saviour's death and passion might appear, it was by manifold Types foreshadowed, and in divers Prophecies foretold. Indeed most of the famous passages of providence (especially the signal afflictions of eminent persons representing our Saviour) do seem to have been prefigurations of, or preludes to his passion. The blood of the righteous Protomartyr Abel, shed by an envious brother, for acceptable obedience performed by him to God's will, and crying to heaven, might prefigure that blood, which cried also, although with another voice, speaking better things than the blood of Abel; not sad complaints, and suits for vengeance, but sweet entreaties and intercessions for mercy. Isaac, the only Son, the son of promise, his oblation in purpose, or death in parable, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, did plainly represent our Saviour, the promised seed, his being really offered, and afterward miraculously restored to life. Joseph his being sold, and put into slavery by his envious brethren, being slanderously accused, and shut in prison (*whose feet they hurt with fetters, the iron entred into his soul*) and this by God's disposal, in order to his exaltation; and that he might be a means of preserving life, and preparing a convenient habitation for the children of Israel, doth well resemble him, who by suffering entred into his glory; who thereby being perfected, became the author of salvation to his brethren, all true Israelites; who went to prepare mansions of rest and light, a heavenly Goshen for them. David's persecutions foregoing his royal dignity and prosperous state, which he expresseth in such strains as these; *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; the sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death prevented me*; how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Lord's afflictions, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to consider; as also the rest of such passages having a mysterious importance accommodable to this purpose. However, all the sacrifices of old instituted by God, we may with fuller confidence affirm to have been chiefly preparatory unto, and prefigurative of this most true and perfect sacrifice; by virtue whereof indeed those *condemnation*, and *curse*, umbratick representations (or insinuations) did obtain their substance, validity and effect: if they did not signifie this in design, they could signifie nothing in effect; for as *without shedding of blood there was no remission* (God's anger would not be appeased, nor his justice satisfied without it; it being blood, which according to God's prescription, did make atonement for the soul) as the appointment of those sacrifices did speak and signify; so it was impossible that the blood of bulls, and goats, should take away sin; that those legal gifts and sacrifices should perfect the conscience of him that did the service; that is, should entirely assure him of pardon and impunity, or raise in him a strong and clear hope of God's favour: the lives of beasts were not in value answerable, nor could fitly be subrogated in stead of mens souls, which had offended, and thence were liable to death; the effusion of their blood could not reasonably satisfy a man's conscience, sensible of guilt, and fearful of God's displeasure, that by it God was fully appeased; they must therefore refer unto a *superior victim*, a more excellent sacrifice; one more sufficient in it self, and more acceptable to God; in virtue of which, and in regard thereto sin might be thoroughly

ly expiated, God's wrath might be propitiated, divine vengeance might be removed, the mind of man therefore might be comforted and contented. The High Priests entrance once a year into the Holy of Holies, *not without blood to atone for his own and the peoples ignorances* (or miscarriages) did imply, that our great High Priest should make one bloody atonement for the offences of mankind, and passing through the veil of mortal flesh, should enter into the true *Sanctum Sanctorum* of heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us; exhibiting the virtue of his meritorious passion, together with his effectual intercession for mercy toward us. Especially the *Paschal Lamb*, in its substance (as a lamb, meek and gentle) in its quality (as without blemish and spot, pure and innocent) in its manner of preparation and dressing (being killed by all the assembly, having its blood sprinkled upon the doors of every house, being roasted with fire, having bitter herbs for its sauce) with other observable circumstances about it, was a most apposite emblem of *Christ our Passover*: who not only by his death did signify, and mind us of, but did really achieve our deliverance from the mystical *Egypt*, our state of spiritual bondage. So did ancient types exhibit, and represent; plain predictions also did express the same death and suffering of our Lord: *Those things* (saith S. Peter) *which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled*; not one Prophet only, not some few; but *all*, saith he, (that is, either plainly or covertly, either directly or by consequence) *have foretold* (or foretold) it: it is our negligence, or stupidity, if we do not discern it in them; as our Lord intimated, when he thus spake to his disciples; *O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the Prophets have spoken; ought not Christ* (ought he not according to their prefigurations, and predictions) *to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?* That David, an illustrious representative of the *Messias*, doth often describe as belonging to himself, mortal agonies and sufferings, not well applicable *αὐτῷ*, or in direct historical meaning to his own person, and therefore in reason, according to a more high and perfect sense, to be understood of the *Messias* himself; that Daniel plainly foretelleth, that in a certain time the *Messias* should be cut off: that *Isaiah* doth in several places insinuate; and in the famous 53d Chapter of his Prophecy doth clearly describe the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that even those of the *Jewish* Doctors, who have been most earnest opposers of our Lord, have been forced to acknowledge, that there is to be as well one *Messias* to suffer, as another to prosper, and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend, or so perverse as not to acknowledge the consistency between antecedent suffering, and consequent glory; between a night of *darkness* and sorrow, and a day of light and joy breaking out from it; not being able or willing to distinguish between an external pomp in this world, and an external majesty in the future state. But unto us God's so forward care, by the spirit of Christ in his Prophets, *αὐγὰς*, to fore-witness (as S. Peter speaketh, or to testify before-hand) the sufferings of our Saviour, and the glories succeeding, doth imply, with what diligence of attention we should regard; with what firmness of faith we should embrace, with what satisfaction of heart we should entertain this great and admirable dispensation.

4. We may consider, that this death was compassed by God's especial providence, directing and disposing it, although not without the active concurrence of men: the treacherous disposition, and covetous appetite of *Judas*; the envious humour, and blind zeal of the Scribes and Priests; the wanton fickleness, and wild rudeness of the people; the fearful and selfish temper of the Governour were but instruments, whereby God's own hand did inflict this sore chastisement upon his Son for us: It was the Lord that laid upon him the iniquities of us all, by God he was stricken, smitten and afflicted: Pilate, 'tis said, had no power to do what he did, but what was given him from above: The Jews with their Rulers proceeded rashly and ignorantly; otherwise, as S. Paul affirmeth, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but God advisedly, as S. Peter told them, did accomplish it; He did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us: He as it were suspended his bowels of pity toward him, he withdrew his face of kindness from him, out of compassion and benignity toward us; he used him severely, that he might deal favourably with us.

Yet did man actively concur therein; all mankind in a sort, by its representatives, was involved as principally in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by which he suffered; there was a general conspiracy of Jew and Gentile practised against the life of their common Saviour. Of a truth, saith S. Peter, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and with the people of Israel: In the Jews the horrid ingratitude of men, in the Gentiles their wretched infirmity did appear; the which, by their active efficacy toward our Lord's death, did signify the meritorious influence they also had upon it; that it was our iniquity and corruption which did cause it: so as a work of divine providence (the most admirable work ever accomplished by providence) as an act of humane pravity (the most heinous act ever committed by men) is the death of our Lord considerable.

5. But more immediately the quality and condition of our Saviour's person do most commend to us, and advance the worth of his death: If as the Psalmist saith, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*; if the spotless candour, and unblemished integrity of a Lamb do make its blood precious, and qualifie it for an acceptable sacrifice; How valuable to God shall be the death of a person, so perfectly holy and innocent; who did not so much as know sin; in whose mouth no guile was ever found; who was holy, harmless, undefiled, re-moved (at infinite distance removed) from sinners; who needed not to offer sacrifices for his own sins; whose death therefore for others were apt to be more available and acceptable. Again, If the life of a King be (as King David's people told him) *worth ten thousand lives*; if it be a most enormous crime, and highest treason to imagine his death; How valuable must be the death of a person, so incomparably transcendent in dignity? of the Lord of glory, of the Prince of life; *Ye denied the Holy and the Just one; ye slew the Prince of life*; — They crucified the Lord of glory; so the Apostles do aggravate the business. But a farther height, a perfect immensity indeed, of worth and efficacy, must needs accrue to the death of our Saviour, from his being the son of God; from his being God (One, and the same in nature with his Almighty, and All-glorious Father, for it is the blood of Christ, the son of God, which purgeth us, from all sin; yea, God himself did (as Saint Paul saith in the Acts) purchase the Church with his blood; it is the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity: and, Hereby (saith S. John) perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: That the immortal God should die, that the most High should be debased to so low a condition, as it cannot be heard without wonder, so it could not be undertaken without huge reason, nor accomplished without mighty effect: Well indeed might such a condescension serve to advance us from the basest state to any pitch of honour and happiness; well might one drop of that Royal blood of heaven suffice to purchase many worlds, to ransom innumerable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of sins, however grievous and foul. But so much for the peculiar adjuncts, and respects of our Lord's death.

3. Let us now consider the causes, and principles, whence it proceeded; which moved God to determine it, and our Lord to undertake it; they were in both acts most voluntary and free: of the Father it is said, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him*; and, *Behold* (saith our Lord in the Psalm) *I come to do thy will, O God*; that is, as the Apostle to the Hebrews expoundeth it, to offer, not the blood of beasts in sacrifice, but my own body according to thy will and appointment; And, *This commandment* (saith he in S. John) *I received of my Father, to lay down my life*; and, *The Cup* (saith he again) *which my Father hath given me, Shall I not drink it?* so on the Father's part, and on our Saviour's likewise it was no less voluntary; for, *None* (saith he) *taketh my life from me*: (that is, It is not from any necessity or compulsion that I do part with it) *but I lay it down of my self*; (with absolute choice and freedom) *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to resume it*; and, *The bread*, saith he, *which I shall give, is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world*; *The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many*; the yielding his flesh to death, the paying his life a ransom, were deeds of gift, perfectly free: and that both in regard to God the Father, and the Son, this performance was voluntary, S. Paul together thus expresseth; *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God, and our Father*; so this death issued from the joint Wills of God, and his Son: But as she

the volitions of every intelligent and wise agent do always proceed from some principle inclining, or are directed according to some impulsive cause moving to them, so divers principles, and causes of these voluntary acts are declared in Scripture; the chief of which are reducible to these two; one internally disposing God's goodness; the other externally inviting man's distress: The case stood thus: Mankind lying in a sad and forlorn estate, oppressed by Satan, enslaved to sin, subject to a rigorous law, exposed to the severity of justice, tormented by the sense of guilt, fearful of divine wrath and due vengeance; in short, by the sentence of heaven, and by the suffrage of conscience within, condemned to punishment unavoidable, and to intollerable misery: Man, I say, lying in so desperately uncomfortable a condition, God's infinite goodness regarded his poor creature, his bowels of compassion yerned toward him, a desire of relieving sprang up in his will; thence was he moved to provide such a remedy, suitable and sufficient for his delivery; for the removing all those mischiefs, and curing all those distempers: the main source of all this wonderful performance (as of all other providential dispensations, and works *ad extra*) was that most excellent perfection of God; which, in regard to this matter, is sometime termed *χρησις*, benignity or bounty; implying the great benefit and advantage we do thence receive; sometimes grace, or favour, signifying the pure freeness in dispensing it, without any design of profit to himself, or any desert on our part (*By the grace of God he tasted death for every man*) sometimes mercy, denoting our bad deserts, or obnoxiousness to justice and punishment; sometimes pity, signifying the great need we had thereof, by reason of our extreme distress and misery. Commonly also it is, by the most obliging and endearing name stiled love, and philanthropy, intimating the earnest regard and benevolence God had to us as his creatures, and as capable of being benefitted and bettered by him: *Herein* (saith S. Paul) *God commended his love toward us, in that we being yet sinners, Christ died for us.* And, *God* (saith S. John) *loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for us;* and, *God* (saith our Lord himself) *so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son — that the world might be saved by him.*

By the way it is worth observing, that there is distinguishable a three-fold love of God toward men, intimated in Scripture. 1. A general love to mankind, antecedent to the sending our Lord, and his performances, being the ground of God's designing them; which may be called a love of pity, or mercy toward poor man lying under condemnation and distress; this is that *φιλανθρωπία ὡς σωτῆρος* *ἡμῶν*, philanthropy of God our Saviour, which appeared in saving us (that is in granting us the capacity and means of salvation) not by works of righteousness, which we had done, but by his mercy; the love which he commended, in that while we were sinners, Christ dyed for us. 2. A love, immediately consequent upon our Lord's performances and sufferings, and procured by them; whereby God is so far pleased with men, and reconciled to the world, that he desireth all mens salvation, and offereth to them terms and means thereof; in regard to which our Lord is said to be the Saviour of the World, and Redeemer of all men; of which love S. Paul speaketh, when he saith, that *being enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*; and that *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins*; and that *God having made peace by the blood of his cross, did reconcile by him all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*; the which may be called a love of reconciliation and favour; or the grace of God which came by Jesus Christ.

3. A peculiar love of friendship, and complacence, which God beareth toward all those, who do sincerely turn, and steadfastly adhere to him, repenting of their sins, and embracing the Gospel; and persisting in obedience to his laws; such God is every where represented to affect with tenderest love, as his faithful servants, his good friends, and dear children; being especially the Saviour of them: this distinction is observable for our better understanding the passages of scripture concerning this matter; in which God is sometime represented as bearing a general love to all men, sometimes as more especially loving the faithful and good men.

The like principles and impulsive causes are said to move our Lord to undertake, and undergo death for us; it was goodness, and love toward us that inclined him thereto: *Christ* (saith S. Paul) *loved us, and delivered up himself for us an offering, and sacrifice to God.* *He loved the Church, and delivered up himself for it;* *He*

Apoc. 1. 5. loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood. Hereby we perceive the love of
 1 John 3. 16. God, because he laid down his life for us; I live (saith S. Paul again) by the faith
 (Joh. 15. 13.) of the Son of God, who loveth me, and gave himself for me.
 Gal. 2. 20.

Such were the principles disposing, and causes in a sort moving; to which we
 1 Cor. 15. 3. may add our sins, as the meritorious causes of our Saviour's death: He died for
 Heb. 10. 12. our sins; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. He
 Isa. 53. 5, 6. died for us, not only as for men, not only as for wretched men, but as for unjust
 2 Cor. 5. 15. and sinful men; as for enemies, and strangers to God; such as had grievously dis-
 Rom. 5. 6, 8. pleased God, had incurred heinous guilt, had deserved, and were become obnox-
 1 Pet. 3. 16. ious to severest punishment; so standing in need of reconciliation, propitiation and
 redemption. Had we been innocent and guiltless, there had wanted sufficient
 cause, or just reason for his death; God would not have been angry, justice could
 have had no pretence, or hold; we should not have been liable to suffer our selves,
 Rom. 6. 23. nor could he have suffered for us. Death is the debt, or wages due to sin; which
 Isa. 53. 6, 4, he therefore payed, because we owed it, and could not discharge it: All we (as
 11. it is said in the Prophet) have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way,
 * 2 Cor. 5. 21. and the Lord (therefore) hath laid on him the iniquity of us all: Our sins were not
 1 Tim. 2. 6. only indirect, or remote occasions of his death, but did procure it in way of de-
 Matt. 20. 28. sert: even as they would have been meritorious causes of our death had he not
 1 Cor. 6. 20. undertaken for us, so were they the like causes of his death, who died for us,
 7. 23. and in our stead; who * was made sin (that is, a sinner, or a sacrifice) for us;
 Heb. 9. 12. who gave himself *ἀντάνατον*, a ransom in stead of us all; paying his blood a price for
 Gal. 3. 13. us, and redeeming us thereby from all the penalties and inconveniences we were li-
 1 Pet. 1. 18. able to; buying us from the curse, by becoming a curse for us; who had upon him the
 Rom. 3. 24. chastisement of our peace; and did offer up his soul an offering,
 2 Pet. 2. 1. and sacrifice for our sins; thereby expiating them, propitiat-
 Col. 1. 14. ing God's wrath, and reconciling God unto us, purging us
 from guilt, and procuring entire remission for our sins; the
 which considerations do sufficiently argue our sins in way of
 desert, to have been the causes of his death.

Isa. 53. 5, 10. Heb. 10. 12. 1 John
 2. 2. 4. 10. Rom. 3. 25. Heb. 2. 17.
 Rom. 5. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Eph. 2.
 16. 1. 7. Heb. 9. 14, 23, 26. John 3.
 36. Matt. 26. 28. Col. 1. 14. 1 John
 3. 7. Apoc. 1. 5.

Now for the ends which our Lord's death aimeth at, and the effects which it
 produceth (these we join, because in reality they are the same) they, in Scrip-
 ture-reckoning and expression, are various and many: the most general are these,
 comprehending divers others subordinate to them.

1. The illustration of God's glory, by demonstrating and displaying therein
 Rom. 3. 5. his most excellen. attributes and perfections, so doth S. Paul teach us: Whom
 Col. 1. 27. God (saith he) hath set forth a propitiation by faith in his blood, *ἵνα ὁπότεν ἡμεῖς ἀγαθόν*
 Eph. 2. 7. *ἡμεῖς ἀγαθόν*, for a demonstration of his righteousness, that is, as I take it, of his good-
 (Joh. 21. 20.) ness, his justice, his fidelity, his constancy, of all those commendable perfections,
 John 13. 31. which are expressed in dealing with others; and our Lord, his passion being in-
 17. 4. stantly to follow, made this reflection; Now is the Son of man glorified, and God
 is glorified in him: and, I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work
 which thou gavest me to do. God did therein shew himself most highly good and
 gracious, in so providing for the welfare of those who deserved nothing of him,
 who deserved ill of him, who had offended and injured him very heinously: he
 manifested himself most strictly just, in not suffering iniquity to go unpunished,
 but rather than so, exposing his own dear Son to punishment, and in him chusing
 himself to suffer; he declared his wisdom in contriving so admirable an expedi-
 ent, whereby both his goodness might be exercised, and his justice not infringed;
 he shewed his veracity, fidelity and constancy, in executing by his providence
 what he before had designed and promised, although so grievous and bitter to
 the Son of his love; he therein also laid a ground of declaring his All-mighty
 power, in raising him from the dead, as likewise of his goodness and justice in
 exalting him: thus by our Saviour's death was the divine glory much illustrated,
 and our good consequently promoted; for that we therein contemplating him so
 amiable for goodness, so terrible for justice, so venerable for all excellency, may
 be induced thence to love him, to dread him, to worship and reverence him, as it
 becometh us, and as it is necessary for us in order to our happiness.

2. The dignifying, and exaltation of our Lord himself; by acquiring unto
 him in a manner a new right unto, and enstating him in an universal dominion,
 in a transcendent glory, in perfect joy accruing to him by remuneration for so
 excel-

excellent an instance of submission, and obedience to God's will. This is that which our Lord foresaw, and foretold: *If God was glorified in him, then will God glorify him in himself; and shall straightway glorify him.* And, *To this end* (saith S. Paul) *Christ died, that he might be the Lord of the dead and living.* And, *For the suffering of death he was crowned with glory, and honour,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. And, *He was obedient to the death, therefore God exalted him;* and, *The Prince of our Salvation was perfected by suffering;* and, *For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross;* and, *He* (saith the Prophet of him) *shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.* And, *Worthy* (say the heavenly host in the Apocalypse) *is the lamb that is slain* (worthy is he, for that he was slain, and did redeem us to God by his blood) *to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

3. The salvation of mankind; the which he was designed to procure by his death, and in many respects he did promote it thereby.

He did it by appeasing that wrath of God, which he naturally beareth toward iniquity, and reconciling God to men, who by sin were alienated from him; by procuring a favourable disposition, and intentions of grace toward us. *While we were sinners* (saith S. Paul) *Christ died for us* (and sinners or wicked men God cannot like or endure): *Thou art not,* saith the Psalmist, *a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity:* and, *The wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth;* yet for us, being such, Christ died, removing thereby that just hatred and displeasure; as S. Paul presently after expreth, and expoundeth it: *When, saith he, we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son:* and elsewhere, *God* (saith he) *was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;* the non-imputation of our sins is expressed as a singular effect, an instance, an argument of his being in mind reconciled, and favourably disposed toward us: and again; *He died to reconcile both* (Jews and Gentiles) *unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;* that is, God being thereby reconciled to all people, they became thence united together in the common relation of friends, and fellow-servants to God; becoming, as it there follows, *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God* (or allyed unto him by spiritual relations.)

Again, It furthered our salvation, by purchasing the remission of our sins, and justification of our persons; our freedom from condemnation and punishment, our appearance as upright, and acceptable in God's sight; upon the conditions of faith and repentance propounded in the Gospel; in regard to which effects he is said thereby to redeem us from our sins, to bear them, to take them away, to expiate them, to cleanse, to purge, to sanctify us from them: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who shall condemn them? It is Christ that died:* that is, Christ's death hath freed them from all liableness to guilt and condemnation. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us;* that is, he by undergoing an accursed kind of death hath purchased an indemnity and impunity for the transgressors of God's law: and, *Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath;* that is, from the effects of God's just displeasure, condemnation and punishment: and, *In whom* (saith S. Paul again clearly) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace:* and, *My blood* (saith our Lord) *is the blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many for the remission of sins:* and, *Christ* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *was once offered to bear the sins of many* (or of the many, the multitude of men): *Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, as a sacrifice, for the abolition of sin by the sacrifice of himself:* and, *Behold* (saith S. John the Baptist) *the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world:* and, *The blood of Christ doth* (saith S. John) *cleanse us from all sin:* *He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* *He is a propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world:* And, *Jesus, that by his blood he might sanctify the people, did suffer out of the gate. He delivered himself up for the Church, that he might sanctify it — that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.*

Our

Our Lord also by his death procured our salvation, as having thereby purchased for us means sufficient to free us from the power and dominion of sin, to purifie our hearts, and sanctifie our lives; for, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*: And, *He gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world*: And, *We were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver, or with gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, from our vain conversation, delivered from our fathers*: And, *He by his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness*. We are with him dead to sin; our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Tit. 2. 14.

1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

1 Pet. 2. 24.

Rom. 6. 2, 6, 8, 11.

In subordination to, coincidence, or concurrence with the principal designs and effects, our Lord also died for the reparation of God's honour, which we by contempt of his authority, and violation of his law had impaired, but our Saviour by so signal an obedience thereto did repair; for the recovery of God's right, which was infringed by with-drawing so great and noble a part of his creation from its due allegiance and service; the which he recovered and restored to him; for the satisfaction to God's justice, provoked by so heinous impieties and iniquities; the which was abundantly performed by so infinitely valuable a compensation, and sacrifice offered thereto.

Also for ratification of the new Covenant between God and us; whence his blood is called, *the blood of the Covenant, the blood of the New Testament*.

For the pacifying and reconciling all things in heaven and earth; removing all causes of dissent and distance; inducing obligations to concord and charity.

1 Cor. 15. 55.

Heb. 2. 14.

Kalamyous.

Col. 2. 19.

John 12. 31.

16. 11.

For pulling out the sting, and removing the terrors of death; destroying (or defeating) him that had the power of death, and delivering them who through the fear of death are all their life-time subject to death.

For the suppressing, vanquishing, and triumphing over the powers of hell and darkness, the which he did, as S. Paul telleth us, achieve upon his cross; and by his death he telleth us, that the Prince of this world was condemned, and cast out.

For engaging us to the practice of all righteousness and obedience (especially to the most excellent, high and hard parts thereof, charity, humility, meekness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and perseverance) both from our obligation in regard to what he suffered for us, and in imitation of his example. For,

Heb. 12. 1, 2.

We should run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame: And, *Christ having suffered for us in the flesh, we should*

1 Pet. 4. 1, 12.

(saith S. Peter) *arm our selves with the same mind, — so as no longer to live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God*.

1 Tim. 6. 13.

Lastly, for attestation unto, and confirmation of divine truth; sealing by his blood that heavenly doctrine which he taught, and witnessing before Pontius Pilate a good confession: he was the Prince of Martyrs; who, as he for this end (as he

John 18. 37.

told Pilate) *was born, and for this end came into the world, that he might bear witness to the truth*, so he especially did accomplish that glorious design by his death;

Heb. 12. 3, 4.

enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself, resisting unto blood in combating against sin; by his blood indeed all other witnesses of truth, did (as it is said in

Rev. 12. 11.

the Revelation) *accomplish their warfare, and obtain victory*: his blood purchased for them their resolution and strength; his promises supported them, his example did animate them, to the profession and maintenance of truth, in the greatest dangers, and most violent assaults.

Such ends did the death of our Lord regard, such fruits did grow from it, which the time permitteth us but thus cursorily to touch.

5. Now for the practical influences the consideration of this Point should have upon us, they are many and great; but we now can only name, or insinuate them.

1. It should beget in us the highest degrees of love and gratitude toward God, and toward our Saviour, in regard to this highest expression of love, and instance of beneficence toward us. Greater love God could not have shewed, than in thus destinating, and offering up his only dearest Son to death (a most painful and shameful

shameful death) for our sake; and, Greater love (he told us himself) *than this hath no man, than that one should lay down his life for his friends*; no man hath greater, except himself, who even laid his life down for his enemies and persecutors: And love so incomparably, so extremely great, doth surely require correspondent degrees of love and thankfulness. John 15. 13. Rom. 5. 10.

2. It should raise in us great faith and hope in God, excluding all distrust and despair, that God will not bestow upon us whatever is needfully, or conveniently good for us; for He, (as S. Paul argueth) *who did not spare his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

3. Particularly, it should comfort us, and satisfy our conscience in regard to the guilt of our sins, however contracted, supposing that we do heartily repent of them; for that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*; and, that *Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*; by virtue of his death we sincerely repenting are freed from all condemnation, we truly believing have a firm and sure peace with God: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth, seeing it is Christ that hath dyed?* We are very blameably incredulous, if having such an assurance from God, and such an engagement upon him, we distrust his mercy. Rom. 8. 1. 5. 1. Rom. 8. 34.

4. It discovereth unto us the heinousness of our sins, and thence should breed in us a vehement detestation, together with a great dread of them; a detestation of them, as having provoked God to such a pitch of displeasure, causing him to deal thus severely with his own beloved Son; as having brought so heavy suffering upon a person so infinitely high in dignity, excellent in worth, kind and gracious to us; a dread of them, as exposing us, if we do not avoid and forsake them, to the most grievous pains and miseries; for, *if these things were done to a green tree, (if such punishments were inflicted upon one so innocent, so worthy, so little obnoxious to the fire of divine wrath and vengeance) What shall be done to the dry?* that is, What will become of us, who are so guilty, so combustible by that fire, if we by presumptuous commission of sin, and impenitent continuance therein, do incense God against us? Luke 23. 31.

5. It should work in us a kindly contrition and remorse for our sins, which were indeed the murderers of so good a friend, and loving a Saviour: others were but instruments, they were the principal authors of his death; they most truly betrayed him, they accused him, they condemned him, they lifted him up to the accursed tree: they moved God, and enabled men to inflict this horrible punishment on him.

6. It should deter us from them, and engage us most carefully to avoid them, as those which in a sort do exact another death from him; *crucifying him afresh* (as the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us) *vilifying and defiling the precious blood of the covenant* (as he likewise teacheth.) Heb. 6. 6. 10. 29.

7. It should engage us to a patient submission and resignation of our selves to the will and providence of God; *forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, we should (as S. Peter adviseth) arm our selves likewise with the same mind*; and, *Let (exhorteth S. Paul) the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*: We should not disdain, nor upon any account be displeased, or unwilling in bearing any cross, or affliction, to follow the pattern of our great Master; *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross.* Heb. 12. 13.

8. It doth also oblige us to the deepest mortification in conformity to his death: we should be *wish him* (or after him) *crucified to the lusts and affections of the flesh, to the fashions, glories, desires and delights of the world*; *knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.* Phil. 3. 20. Gal. 5. 24. Gal. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Col. 3. 3, 5. Rom. 6. 5, 6.

9. It is also a strong engagement to the fullest measure of charity toward our brethren; for, *If (saith S. John) God so loved us (as to give his own Son to die for us) then ought we to love one another, in a degree answerable to such an obligation and pattern*: *If (added the same Apostle) he laid down his life for us, then ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren.* 1 John 4. 11. 3, 16.

10. In fine, we hence appear obliged to yield up our selves wholly to the service of our Saviour; to the promoting of his interest and glory: since, we (as *1 Cor. 6. 20. 7. 23.* S. Paul admonisheth us) are not our own, being bought with a price; and must therefore glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's, by a purchase so dear and precious; since, as that Apostle again mindeth us, *2 Cor. 5. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 1.* Christ died for all, that they which live might not live to themselves, but to him that died for them; this being, let us not wrong the Lord who bought us, by withholding his due, the price of his dearest blood; let us not abuse him, by defeating his purpose, no less advantageous to our selves, than honourable to him; but as by being our Saviour, he hath deserved to be our Lord, so in effect let him ever be; let us ever believe him so in our heart, confess him with our mouth, and avow him in our practice; which that we may do, God of his infinite mercy, by his holy grace, vouchsafe unto us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Apoc. 1. 4. Now, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God; and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Apoc. 5. 12. Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Apoc. 5. 13. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

He descended into Hell.

SERMON XXVIII.

ACTS II. 27.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell.



Aint Peter in his Sermon to the Jews cites these words of the Psalmist to prove the Resurrection of Christ. And because upon these words our Saviour's descent into Hell seem to be grounded, I shall from this Text take occasion to discourse of this Article of the Creed, *Kath'w'm in q'de, He descended into hell.*

This Article is of later standing in the Creed, and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones publick or private; excepting that of *Aquileia*; into which also perhaps it might have been inserted not long before *Ruffinus*. his time; and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the *Fathers*, and afterwards among the *Schoolmen*, and lately among *modern Divines*) been much debated, having yielded occasion to many prolix and elaborate discourses: To recite the several opinions about it, or different explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater time and pains than I can well afford; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than I could hope to achieve. Wherefore (both upon these accounts, and because I rather chuse to insist upon matters more clear in their nature, and more practical in consequence) I should be willing altogether to wave this obscure and perplexed subject; yet however somewhat to comply with expectation, I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming conducive to the clearing, or to the ending of the controversies about it.

Now

Now whereas there may be a threefold inquiry; *one* concerning the meaning of these words (*He descended into hell*) intended by those who inserted them; *another* concerning the most proper signification of the words themselves; a *third* concerning the meaning, they are in consistency with truth capable of;

1. The *first* I resolve, or rather remove, by saying, it seems needless to dispute, what meaning they, who placed the words here, did intend; since, 1. It is possible, and by many like instances might be declared so, and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof; as we believe all the Scriptures, and commend them to the faith of others, without understanding the sense of many passages thereof. And since, 2. Perhaps they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then passable among divers, but not built upon any sure foundation (like that of the *millennium*; and the necessity of infants communicating, &c. which were anciently in great vogue, but are now discarded) and since, 3. To speak roundly, their bare authority, whoever they were (for that doth not appear) could not be such, as to oblige us to be of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend; they perhaps were such, to whom we might owe much reverence, but should not be obliged to yield entire credence to their opinions. But farther, 4. Were I bound to speak my sense, I should say, that, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did intend to affirm, that our Saviour's soul, did by a true and proper kind of motion descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth; where they conceived the souls of men were detained; for this appears to have been the more general and current opinion of those times, which it is probable they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

2. As to the *second* inquiry, concerning the signification of the words, what may be meant by *He descended*; whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body, called *He* by *Synecdoche*; what by *descended*, whether (to omit that sense, which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the purpose; whether, I say) by *descending* may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below: what by *Hell*, whether a state of being, or a place; if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones; or indifferently, and in common of both those; for such a manifold ambiguity these words have, or are made to have; and each of these senses are embraced, and contended for: I shall not examine any of them, nor farther meddle in the matter, than by saying,

1. That the *Hebrew* word *Sheol* (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word *Hell* (or *Hades*) in this place is conceived to depend) doth seem originally, most properly, and most frequently (perhaps constantly, except when it is translated, as all words sometimes are, to a figurative use) to design the whole Region protended downward from the surface of the earth to a depth (according to the vulgar opinion, as it seems anciently over the world) indefinite and unconceivable; vastly capacious in extension, very darksome, desolate, and dungeon-like in quality (whence it is also frequently stiled the *pit*, (a) the *lowest pit*, (b) the *abyss*, (c) the *depths of the earth*, (d) the *darkness*, * the *depths of hell*.) I need not labour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since it is obvious, that this *Sheol* (when most absolutely and properly taken, the circumstances of discourse about it implying so much) is commonly opposed to *heaven*, not only in situation, but in dimension and distance; as when *Job* speaking of the unsearchableness of the divine perfections, saith; *It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do; deeper than hell, what canst thou know?* And the Prophet *Amos*; *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb into heaven, thence will I bring them down.*

Nobis inferi — in foffo terra & in alio vafitar. & in ipfis visceribus ejus abfufa profunditas. Tert. de Au. 55.
* *Απύλυν.* Prov. 15. 11.
Διαπύλυν. Prov. 27. 20.

(a) { Ifa. 38. 18.
Pfal. 88. 6. Eccluf. 21. 11.
(b) Pfal. 71. 20. John 2. 6. Rom. 10. 7.
(c) Pfal. 71. 20.
(d) Job 17. 13. Pfal. 143. 3. Eccl. 6. 4. 1 Sam. 2. 9.
* Prov. 9. 18.

Job. 11. 8.
Amos 9. 2. }
(Pfal. 139. 8.)
(Deut. 32. 22.)
2. I Ifa. 57. 9.)

2. I say farther, because the bodies (or visible remainders) of persons dying do naturally fall down, or are put into the bosom of this pit, which is therefore an universal grave, and receptacle of them, therefore to dye is frequently termed *שְׁלָחוּם אֶל שְׁאוֹל*, or *שְׁלָחוּם אֶל שְׁאוֹל*, to descend, or to be brought down into this hell; which happening to all men without exception (for, as the Psalmist says, *there is no man that shall deliver his soul* (or his life, or himself) *from the hand of this all-grasping hell*) therefore it is attributed promiscuously to all men, good and bad alike; I will go down, saith good Jacob, unto the grave, unto my son mourning (*שְׁלָחוּם אֶל שְׁאוֹל*, I will go down to Sheol, this common grave of mankind) and so frequently of others. Whence this Hell is apt figuratively to be put for, and to signify equivalently with death it self; and it is once by the LXX. so translated (and S. Peter seems to use the phrase * after them) for death, I say, or for the law, condition and state of death: as in that of Hezekiah in the Prophet Esay, * *Sheol cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth*: where *שְׁאוֹל*, and *שְׁאוֹל* (as the Greek renders Sheol, and death) are the same, and opposed to the living, of whom it is said; *The living, the living he shall praise thee*.

3. I say farther, that this word, according to ancient use, seems not to signify the place, whither mens souls do go, or where they abide; for that

1. It can hardly be made appear, that the ancient Hebrews either had any name appropriated to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly, which way they did go; otherwise than that, as the Preacher speaks, *they returned unto God who gave them*; and that they did abide in God's hand; especially the souls of the just, according to that in the Book of Wisdom: *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them*. And for that,

2. It seems, they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, to go upward than downward, as the Preacher again intimates, when he differenceth the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts; *the soul of beasts descending with its body to the earth; the spirit of man ascending unto God*, to be disposed by him according to his pleasure and justice. And by Enos his being taken to God (whose special residence is expressed to be in heaven above) and by Elias his translation up into heaven (as it is in the Text of the history) 'tis probable, they did rather suppose the souls of the righteous to ascend, than to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns, those *מְנוּחֵי שְׁאוֹל* (closets of hell) as the Book of Wisdom calls them; that *שְׁאוֹל*, (deep pit of hell) as it is in Ben-Sirach; to ascend, I say, whether into the supreme heaven, or no, is not material; but some whither above, nearer unto God's most special residence, into a happy place.

3. I add, that if those ancients had by Sheol meant the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions as those: *The grave (Sheol) cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth*; so Hezekiah spake; *In death there is no remembrance of thee, in SHEOL who shall give thee thanks?* So David said; and, *There is no works nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in SHEOL, whither thou goest*; so the Preacher; who hardly it seems could say so, if by Sheol he meant the place of souls; except he should also mean, that souls after death became deprived of all life and sense. The son of Sirach likewise speaks in the same manner: *Who shall praise the most High in hell, in stead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not; the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord*.

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word *שְׁאוֹל* was assumed by the Jews, to design (as it did among the Greeks) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain, for their bad lives here: Josephus doth often use the word in the first of these senses; and in the New Testament it seems peculiarly applied to the latter; as in the parable of the rich man, who being in *שְׁאוֹל*, in hell and torments, did thence lift up his eyes, and behold afar off Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word Sheol; especially considering how the Jews, after the prophetic days, in their dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did borrow some notions and expressions from elsewhere; which expressions our Saviour and his Apostles might well retain, when they were suitable and accommodable unto truth.

3. But

3. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense in general of this principal word in the Proposition, and of the rest depending thereon, as to their signification here; I do thus, as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning, whereof the words are capable with truth, answer briefly.

1. If we do interpret the *descent into hell* here affirmed of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in the bosom of that universal grave we before spake of; or, if (in a notion little differing from that) we take these words for a phrase (taking its ground thence in the manner fore-mentioned) importing no otherwise than when it was spoken of *Jacob* and others, that our Saviour did really pass into the state of death; we are sure therein not to err; the Proposition so understood being most certainly true: we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first, and best (if not the only) reason of this Proposition being commended to our belief. For that place in the *Acts*, which seems to have been the occasion, and the main ground of this Proposition being asserted in these terms, doth not refuse, but commodiously admits this interpretation: for, our Saviour's *soul not being left in Hell, and not seeing corruption*, is plainly by *S. Peter* himself interpreted of his resurrection: *David* (saith he) *foreseeing this, spake of Christ's Resurrection*; and, *Acts 2. 31.* in like manner, by *S. Paul*; *As concerning, that he raised him from the dead, now* *13. 34.* *no more to see corruption*, he said in this wise—— that speech, I say, *Our Saviour's soul not being left in Hell, and, not seeing corruption*, is by the Apostles interpreted to denote our Saviour's resurrection; that is, his being freed from the bands of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh had underwent corruption; and it is opposed unto *David's* continuing in death, and seeing corruption; his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave; the *Apostles* not designing to assert or prove more, than our Lord's Resurrection: *David*, argue they, fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that state; *David* remained unto this day in the grave, and so his body being reduced to dust saw corruption; *ἐτάφηνται* & *ἔτεθον*; he dyed, and was buried, without any reversion; therefore that speech of *Acts 2. 29.* his in the *Psalms* must not fully and ultimately be understood of him, to whom they did not so exactly agree; but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep; whose flesh, being opportunely raised, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, *τὴν ψυχὴν μου*, my soul, or my life; nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition; for (to omit that bolder exposition of *Beza*, who sometime did by the soul understand the dead body, translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro*) nothing is more usual than both for the flesh, and for the soul, (each of them *Sy-* *Exod. 31. 14.* *nechochically*) to signify the person, considered as sometime endued with life: *Levit. 7. 25.* *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death*; and, *that soul shall be cut off*, are *27. 5. 2, &c.* terms equivalent in the Law: the soul that eateth, the soul that toucheth, and the like phrases do often occur; and those expressions, *to deliver their soul from* *Psal. 33. 19.* *death*; *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave*; *What man is he that* *49. 15. 89. 48.* *shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave*? do seem parallel to this, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell*; which yet do import no more, than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death.

Again, taking *soul* for the living soul, or that faculty by which we live, and *hell* for the state of death, the words mentioned, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, will have this natural exposition; agreeable to the *Apostles* design: thou wilt not suffer me to continue deprived of life, till my flesh be corrupted. It is also observable, that *S. Paul* in the 13th of the *Acts*, neglecting the former part, *Thou* *(Dr. H. P. C.)* *shalt not leave my soul in Hell*, contents himself with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy one to see corruption*, intimating both parts to signify the same thing.

If it be objected as an inconvenience to this explication of the words here in the *Creed*, that admitting it, they signify no more, than what was before expressed in plain words, *Dead and buried*; and so contain only a needless repetition: I Answer,

1. That this objection concerns them, who inserted the words here; who yet, even supposing this exposition to be good, might be excusable, as suspecting it possible, that our Saviour being *in hell*, according to *S. Peter*, might imply more than this, although they knew not what distinctly; who also might perhaps in-

tend somewhat by these words different from this sense, but not so truly applicable to them, or agreeable to the truth of the thing; I answer,

2. That to say our Saviour did continue in the state of death for some time, doth add somewhat above his being dead and buried; wherefore thus understanding the *descent* doth not render it altogether superfluous.

3. That a greater inconvenience seems to arise from expounding them otherwise; the doing so, reflecting upon the more ancient compilers, both of this and other *Breviaries* of faith, as the *Nicene*, and *Constantinopolitan* Councils, *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, &c. who left them out; which they should not have done, if they contain any thing highly material and different from what is here otherwise expressed; whose credit is (as I conceive) more to be tended, than of their *Juniors* and followers unknown to us; and so much the more, for that in a matter of this kind, defect or omission is less tolerable, than any redundancy in expression.

1 Cor. 15. 4. Which inconvenience may seem in a manner to reach higher, even to *S. Paul* himself; who in the 15th Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, declaring the sum of what he both learned and taught concerning our Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions his death, burial and resurrection; *I delivered unto you first, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day*; which enumeration of his, we may, it seems, well acquiesce in, as sufficient and compleat, and may thence with great probability infer, that no other *descent* of our Saviour *into hell*, beside his death and burial, was by him understood, or delivered in his *Catechetical* discourses and preachings as a point of faith; so that what is objected as an inconvenience, proves no small advantage to this exposition. But I say farther, to the main question, that,

2. Interpreting *Hell* for the mansion, or habitation of souls departed hence (to omit, that *Sheol*, as I before noted, seems to signifie otherwise in the *Old Testament*, and consequently thence the place in the *Acts*, applyed out of the *Psalms*,

Ἐκ τῆς οὐχίας τῆς ἑσπέρης ἀνέβη εἰς τὴν οὐρανὸν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ ἔθηκε μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων. Gr. Nyll. de im. an. Mart. Baon. eis τὴν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἀναβί. Id.

would not be proper to this purpose; whereby the main ground and support of the assertion it self, taken according to this sense, were removed; waving I say, that consideration, and taking *Ans.* according to the meaning, which we must confess it sometime to bear in the *New Testament*, yet there seems to follow some inconvenience thereon. For then

we must either take it for the place of damned spirits shut up in torment or despair (according to which acception the proposition it self would be most certainly uncertain, having no solid ground for it; and most probably false, for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into paradise; *This*

Luke 23. 43. day, said he to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in paradise*) or we must take it for a place common to all souls, as well good and blessed; as bad and miserable; (for that it in the *New Testament* at least, comprehends the place of torment, is evident by the parable of the *rich man* and *Lazarus*.) But I think that *S. Austin* had reason to doubt, whether it were consonant to the style of the *New Testament*, that *Hades*, relating to the state of souls, should there be ever taken in

Apoc. 20. 14. a good or middle sense, at least, whereas 'tis said in the *Revelation*, that those two inseparable companions, *Death* and *Hades* (that *Hades*, which is said to render up its dead to judgment) *were cast into the lake of fire*, 'tis hard to suppose, that *Paradise* was cast in there; yea hard it were to say, that *Hades* was cast in thither, supposing that word did then in its usual latitude of signification (as Christians understood it) comprehend *paradise*. Yea farther, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose paradise to be seated in a place beneath us, or within the earth; that paradise, which is either

* 2 Cor. 12.

Ἐν ὁρῇ καὶ ἐν ἀποκάλυψιν εἶπεν μοι ὁ ἀνδρὶς ὁ αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος, ὅτι ἐν παραδείσῳ τῷ ὑποχθονῇ, &c. Gr. Nyll. T. 2. de Resur. 1. Tertull. Apol. 47.

the same with the third (or highest) heavens in * *S. Paul*, or confining thereto: it is, I say, hard to be forced by an interpretation of these words, to consent, that paradise (that *locus divina amenitatis recipiendis Sanctorum Spiritibus destinatus*; the place of divine comfort and amenity, destined to

receive the spirits of the Saints) should have its place in the darksome bowels of the earth; no commodious situation it seems for a garden, for delightful walks and bowers; yet so it must be seated, that our Saviour's soul may (at least in rigour and propriety of speech) be said to descend thereinto. The word *descend* taking

hell

Hell for the ancient *Sheol*, is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentick use, and the nature of the thing; but taking *hell* in this sense (for the place of souls) it is most probably improper, and hath no certain ground, or authority to commend it; for it is said, that our Saviour's soul was in Hell, not that it descended thither; nor can it by consequence be inferred so to have done, according to this meaning of *hell*. However,

3. I add, that seeing it is a most certain truth, that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the place appointed to receive happy souls after their recession from the body, and resignation into God's hands; if we take *Hell* in a general and common sense for the place or state of souls departed; and descending for passing thereinto (by a falling as it were from life, or by going away together with the descent of the body, and thence styled descending; what appeareth visibly happening to the body, being accommodated to the soul) if I say, we do thus interpret our Saviour's descent into *Hell* for his soul's going into the common receptacle and mansion of souls, we shall so doing be sure not substantially to mistake. And this sense, I conceive, if the words can handsomely bear them, would be very proper to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct from what is otherwise expressed; and serving to the farther establishment of those great *Articles* adjoyning, our Lord's death and resurrection; it implying the perfect accomplishment of death for the soul to have deserted the body, and to have been translated into that *invisibile region*, (as the Book of *Wisdom* calls it) that *invisibile region*, so far distant hence, whence—*revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras*, is a labour indeed, and a work not to be effected, but by the power of him, whose prerogative it is, *to kill, and make alive, to bring down to hell, and to bring up; to lead* *unto the gates of hell, and to bring back again.*

This is all that I shall say about this intricate point; for I cannot well be at the pain to consider, or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why, and to what effect our Saviour descended into Hell.

That our Lord went thither to preach unto, convert and redeem from thence all, or some of the damned Souls (for some say, that he depopulated and emptied that region of darkness; others are not so liberal as to free all thence, but only the fitter objects of compassion and favour; both saying that, which hath very weak, or no reasons to maintain, very strong and plain objections to assail it.) That he went to rescue, and conduct into glory the souls of the *Patriarchs*, and other good persons, from that infernal *Limbus*, in which till then they were detained; (a place by no likely means to be proved existent elsewhere than in the fancy of its inventors) or, That he went to deliver the souls of the just, and Prophets, from the wicked powers, into whose power they had fallen (as *J. Mar-tyr* in his *Dialogue with Tryphon*. p. 105.)

That he went to affront, triumph over, and terrifie the powers of darkness upon their own ground, or in their own dominions.

These, and the like conceits seem enough discountenanced, by saying, the Scriptures no where plainly declare any such thing, and that therefore they have no good ground to stand upon (they pretend only one or two difficult and obscure places in the *first Epistle* of *S. Peter*, which are capable of fair expositions not favourable to them) whereas in teaching us, that our Lord preached upon earth salvation to them, who in this life should be converted to believe upon him and obey his laws; damnation irrecoverable to them, who should persist in infidelity and disobedience: that he merited by his obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a redemption from all future distress, and a translation into bliss; that he by his death vanquished all the powers of hell, and triumphed over them upon the cross; in these things the Scripture is very clear and copious: but concerning that redemption of souls beneath, that translation of souls out of subterraneous closets, or * prisons (as they call them) that local triumph in the Devil's kingdom, it is quite silent, or very dark in expression about them; whence we may well be somewhat backward in yielding assent to such devices, of which, if any perhaps should be true, yet could not the belief thereof be of necessity, or great importance to us: for what our Saviour so did below would not belong to the salvation of the living, which is abundantly provided for by his death and resurrection, with what followed them; nor would it much refer to our practice, which is otherwise sufficiently directed and encouraged. So that we may however safely be ignorant in

Sap. 17. 14.

1 Sam. 2. 6.

Deut. 32. 39.

Tob. 13. 2.

Sap. 16. 13.

Iren. 4. 45.

Euseb. Hist. 1.

Clem. Str. 2.

p. 163. 6. p.

Euseb. De-

monst. 10. 8.

Athanas. Cont.

Apollin.

Vid. Montac.

Orig. Part.

Post. p. 442.

Es in Appar. 1.

Heb. 2. 14.

Col. 2. 15.

* Bellarm.

Vid. Fidei Symbola in Codice Justinian.
Tit. 1. De Gen. ad lit. 8. 5.

Calv. Inst. 3. 25. 6.

in regard to any of those notions. But let it suffice to have discoursed thus far about this endless question; except we will end it with that saying of S. Austin; *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis*: or with that more peremptory saying of Calvin: *Atqui stultum, & temerarium est de rebus incognitis altius inquirere, quam Deus nobis scire permittit.*

He rose again from the Dead.

S E R M O N XXIX.

ACTS I. 3.

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs; being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.



THE most proper, and most usual way of God, in confirming any truth of high moment in special manner revealed by him, is by lending unto them, whom he employs as messengers thereof, his powerful arm for the performance of works supernatural or miraculous. Of such works there is none more certainly such than raising a dead person to life; the doing which upon several accounts plainly surpasseth the power of any creature; not only as exceeding the ordinary law and course of nature established and upheld by God, but for that the Souls of men departing hence do return into God's hand, or into a state by high sentence determined, whence no creature is able to fetch them down, or raise them up; because also God hath reserved the Prerogative of doing this unto himself; *he holding* (as it is expressed in the Revelation) *the keys of hell, and of death*; he having said, *I am he, and there is no God beside me; I kill, and I make alive.*

Apoc. 1. 18.
Deut. 32. 39.
1 Sam. 2. 6.
Psal. 68. 20.

2 Cor. 1. 22.
John 4. 48.

There could also particularly be no more proper way of confirming our Religion to come from God, whether we consider the persons whom it was designed for, or the doctrines it propounded: The Jews were incapable of conviction by any other way, than by miracle; no other reason would have been apprehended by them, or would have had any force upon them: *The Jews* (saith S. Paul) *require a sign*; and *Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe*, said our Saviour to them. The Gentiles also had been so used to the winding off and on the subtilties and the plausibilities of disputation, that nothing probably in that kind would have sufficed to persuade them; and therefore somewhat miraculous in the highest kind might be needful to convert them: Also the most peculiar and eminent doctrines of our Religion (such as are, *Our Lord Jesus being the Messiah, the Son of God and Saviour of the World, the future resurrection, general Judgment, and dispensation of rewards, answerable to mens practice in this life*) cannot more immediately and directly be assured, than by the resurrection from the dead of him, who principally did reveal them.

Wherefore Almighty God in confirmation of our Religion did perform this great work in raising Jesus our Lord from the dead; and withal (for the conviction of the world, for rendring our faith reasonable, and our infidelity inexcusable) he did take especial care, that the fact should by very sufficient testimony be conveyed unto

unto us; to which purpose he did (as S. Peter said) *προϋποκαταρτισεν*, predestin, pick Acts 10. 41. out, and appoint a competent number of persons, in all respects capable and fit to assert it; this is that which S. Luke in our Text doth in way of Historical narration affirm. And because the truth thereof is in its kind the principal argument, whereby the truth of our Religion in gross may be evinced, we shall for the confirmation of our Faith against all impressions of this incredulous (and therefore impious) age, endeavour by God's assistance now to declare, and maintain it. That *Jesus* truly died, all the world could testify; no death was ever more solemn or remarkable; nor do any adversaries contest it; that he after that death was by Divine power raised again to life is that which we believe and assert: Now whoever with reason shall doubt thereof or deny it, must do it, either because of some repugnance in the fact it self, implying that it could not well be done; or from deficiency of the testimony proving it, as to its authors, or circumstances: but neither of these exceptions may reasonably be admitted.

As for the fact it self, or the notion of a resurrection in general there cannot (admitting that, which as capable of antecedent proof, and as acknowledged by all persons owning any Religion, may be presupposed, the power and providence of God together with his chief Attributes of wisdom and goodness incomprehensible) there cannot be any repugnance therein, or any incredibility. For it was neither in its nature impossible to God, or in its design worthy of him; it contained nothing apparently either beyond the power of God, or presumable to be against his will.

I. To raise a dead man to life, is indeed we confess and avow a work surpassing the power of any creature, not assisted by God; but no reason can be assigned why it should go beyond the Divine power. The doing it doth not involve contradiction, and is therefore an object of power, and at least is achievable by Omnipotence: let the Soul be what it will, and in whatever life may be supposed to consist, nothing can hinder that God may reduce the parts of a man into the same state they sometime before were in. And very easily it is conceivable that He, who (according to the general notions, and current traditions of mankind) did first inspire the Soul of man into his body, may reinfuse it being separated; that he who after death keepeth it in his hand, may thence restore it: who also (according to histories received in all the principal Religions that have been in the world) hath often actually performed it. *Pliny* indeed doth reckon this among instances of things absolutely impossible: *It is faith*

he, a great solace of our imperfect nature, that even God cannot do all things; for neither can he bring death upon himself, if he would, nor bestow eternity on mortals, nor recall the dead to life: but 'tis no wonder, that he, who thought the Soul quite to perish by death, should conceive the restitution thereof impossible; although even supposing that, his opinion

Imperfecta vero in homine natura principia solatia sunt, ne Deum quidem posse omnia; nam neque sibi potest mortem consciscere si velit (quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vita malis) nec mortales aeternitate donare, nec revocare defunctos.
Plin. 11. 7.

was not reasonable; for even any thing how corruptible soever by dissolution of its ingredients, or alteration of its temperament, may by recollecting and re-joining those ingredients, or by re-establishing the causes of such a temperament be restored (as a house whose materials are dispersed may be re-edified, or as a liquor by a new fermentation may be revived) which to effect may not be deemed hard to him, that made the whole world: however to such as him we may say Jer. 32. 17. as our Saviour did to the Sadduces; *yea err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Matt. 22. 29. Especially to those who acknowledge the immortality of the Soul, or its permanence in a separate state, and who admit the truth of the ancient histories among the Jews, it is not only most evidently possible, but very credible, that God upon any considerable occasion should perform it; with such S. Paul might well thus expostulate; *What doth it seem incredible to you that God should raise the dead?* Acts 26. 8. to you that have such previous notions and persuasions about God's omnipotency; (such as the Prophet *Jeremy* expresseth when he saith, *Ab Lord God, behold, thou hast made the heaven, and the earth by thy great power, and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee*) to you who avow God to be the Father of Spirits, who formeth the spirit of man within him, and that when man dieth, his Spirit returneth to God who gave it, to you who believe that our Souls are spiritual substances, like unto Angels subsisting after death, and destin'd to future rewards; to you in fine, who may in your Holy records find so many experiments

ments of this power exerted by God in his Prophets ; such as that of *Elias* his restoring the widow of *Sarepta's* son ; of *Elisha* raising the son of the *Shunamite* ; that of the dead man reviving when his body touched the Prophet's bones ; to you therefore this fact cannot be in it self incredible ; nor indeed can it, for the reasons suggested to any man reasonably seem impossible.

1 Kings 17.
21.
2 Kings 4 35.
13. 21.

2. Nor was it apparently in its design unworthy of God, or inconsistent with his holy Will : For the ends thereof (such as were pretended by the attesters of it) were as very great and important, so most good and reasonable ; it aimed at no slight or trifling matter, but such as in appearance highly concerned the glory of God, and conduced to the welfare of mankind, it professing it self to be a credential of the greatest Embassy that ever came down from heaven to men, importing the complete revelation of God's will, and procurement of Salvation to the world ; and did therefore in that respect well become the wisdom and goodness of God to use it. It pretended to confirm a doctrine containing most true and worthy representations of God, the best that could be ; declaring most gracious intentions in God of mercy and kindness toward men ; no less proper for him than grateful and needful for us ; prescribing most excellent rules and patterns of life (wherein the most genuine piety and virtue, most exact justice and hearty charity, most strict purity and sobriety are prescribed) yielding the most effectual helps to the practice of all goodness, and tendering the best encouragement thereto ; and upon this account therefore also most worthy of God. So that indeed God could not be conceived to perform such a miracle to better purpose, than for promoting the designs it pretendeth, being so very great, and so very good : it could not be improper for the Divine power to be thus exerted in favour of a Religion so apt to promote his glory, and to procure our benefit.

1 Sam. 16. 7.
1sa. 55. 8. 40.
13.
2 Cor. 1. 25.
Luke 16. 15.
1 Cor. 5. 13.
Rom. 11. 33.
(Psal. 92. 5.
36. 7.)
Job 11. 7.

If it be said that it is absurd or improbable, that God should chuse to perform this miracle upon a person of this sort ; one so mean and obscure in the state of his life, so wretched and infamous for the manner of his death ; that God rather should have chosen for the interpreter of his mind, and minister of his purposes a Personage more illustrious in rank, and clear in repute : I answer, *first*, that our shallow fancy is a bad and incompetent Judge of what is reasonable or absurd, convenient or unfit in such cases, touching the counsels of God ; *who seeth not as man seeth ; whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor ways as our ways ; whose folly is wiser than men* (that is, whose counsels, however seeming strange to our dim apprehensions, do yet far excell the results of our best wisdom) before whom, *whatever is high among men is abominable ; with whom the wisdom of this world is folly ; whose judgments are unsearchable, and his ways are past finding out ; as the Holy Scriptures teach us ; and as good reason considering the vast distance between God and us, must acknowledge : so that no such appearance of incongruity can bottom a good exception against this, or any such matter ; otherwise well attested. I say farther*, that God's choice herein, being weighed by a pure and well disposed mind, will appear upon many accounts full of admirable reason and wisdom ; all the Divine Oeconomy concerning our Lord, being rightly apprehended will soon appear *wisdom to the perfect, and will be justified by the children of wisdom* ; as that wherein God's transcendent goodness, and perfect justice and glorious power are with greatest advantage displayed ; whereby the hearts of men are most sweetly comforted under their sense of sin, and fear of misery ; their minds are most clearly instructed in the ways of duty and happiness, their affections are most strongly excited and encouraged to the practice of all goodness : to such purposes (for causes which were it now seasonable, we could produce) our Saviour's low condition, and hard circumstances did admirably serve ; and therefore upon that score it could not be unlikely, that God should raise him from the dead.

1 Cor. 2. 6.
7. 14.
Matt. 11. 19.

3. But neither (which is the most considerable point) is the testimony asserting this fact any-wise defective or insufficient, but hath all the conditions imaginably requisite to the most entire assurance of any such matter. The defect in the testimony, if any be, must arise from weakness or from wilfulness in the witnesses (their want of knowledge, or mistake, their want of honesty or their unfaithfulness) or from some circumstances belonging to their persons, or their testimony, able to invalidate their attestation ; but none of these things can with reason be supposed ; they were in all respects more than competently qualified to attest, and all

all considerable circumstances do assist in confirming their attestation; as by weighing the considerations following may appear:

1. As for their number, it was not one or two persons (although one or two ordinarily do suffice for decision of the greatest cases among men) but many who conspired in asserting it. *He was* (saith S. Paul, one who was conversant with these witnesses, who of a zealous adversary and fierce persecutor of this testimony, did become an earnest avoucher thereof) *seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present.* And, *This Jesus* (say the twelve Apostles) *hath God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses: Twelve* there were who principally were designed, and did take it for their especial duty to attest this matter beside many others; who in their order were able and ready to do it. 1 Cor. 15. 5, 6. Acts 2. 14, 32. 1. 22. 10. 39.

2. These witnesses were no strangers to Jesus, but persons by long conversation most familiarly acquainted with him; *who had* (as it is said, and as it was notorious) *been with him from the beginning, who went out and in with him all the time* (that is for three years space) *from his baptism to his ascension.* John 15. 27. Acts 1. 21, 22.

3. They did aver themselves to be *αὐτῶν τοῦ σώματος, ὡς ἀνθρώπων*, eye or ear witnesses of the matter, as fully informed about it as senses could make them: *We cannot but speak what we have heard and seen. What we did see with our eyes, and what our hands did handle of the word of life; that we report unto you:* So S. John (the beloved disciple, who constantly attended on his dear Master) expresseth his testimony. And, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty:* So S. Peter affirmeth concerning the manner of their testifying these matters. They did, I say, hear and see him, and that with all advantage possible or needful, not once or twice, not in passing or at distance, not in way of glimpse or rumour; but often, for a good time, thoroughly; many days conversing and interchanging discourses with him; *who* (as S. Peter in the name of the rest saith) *did eat and drink with him after that he rose from the dead.* And, *To whom* (as S. Luke their companion, from their mouth in our Text saith) *also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; and, He was* (saith S. Paul, another familiar of theirs) *seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people.* And two of these witnesses (S. John and S. Matthew) are in writings extant relaters of passages occurring in their conversation with him, very many, very sensible as can be. Luke 1. 1. Acts 4. 20. John 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Acts 10. 41. Acts 1. 3. Acts 13. 31.

4. We may also consider that the chief of these witnesses the Apostles themselves were at first (as S. Luke of them, and from them confesseth) so far from being easy or credulous in regard to this matter, that hearing it from others, who before had seen our Lord risen, they took it for a trifle or a fiction; and gave no credence thereto: *their words* (saith the Text) *ἐκείνοις εὐαγγελιστῶν, οὐκ ἔδεικνεν ἑαυτοὺς ὡς ἰδόντες, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀκούοντες, καὶ οὐκ ἔμελλον εὐαγγελισθῆναι, ἕως ὅτου οὐκ εἶδον τὰ σημεῖα καὶ τὰ τέρατα τὰ ἐκείνῳ.* *did seem to them* (as Luke 24. 11. say or) *an idle tale, and they believed them not.* Yea some of them would hardly confide in their own eyes, nor would yield assent unto the fact appearing to them, until by letting them touch him, and shewing them the marks of his crucifixion remaining on his body, he demonstrated himself to be the very same person who had lived with them and died before them: *They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a Spirit — And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, &c.* are words in the history. Luke 24. 11. Matt. 28. 17. Luke 24. 37. John 20. 27.

5. Upon these grounds as they professed, they did without any mincing, hesitancy, or reservation in the most full, clear, downright and peremptory manner, with firm confidence and alacrity concurrently aver the fact: *They spake the word of God with boldness — and with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.* Acts 4. 31, 33. 14. 3.

Which things being weighed, it will appear impossible, that the attesters of this fact (supposing them in their wits and senses; and certainly they were so, as presently we shall shew, and as the thing it self plainly speaks) could not be ignorant therein, or mistaken about it. For if all the senses of so many persons in a matter so grossly sensible, so often and for such a continuance of time, can be distrusted; if the Apostles could imagine they saw their friend and Master, whom they so long had waited upon, when they did not see him; that they

heard him making long discourses with them, when they did not hear him; that they did walk, eat and drink with him, did touch, and feel him when there was really no such thing, what assurance can we have of any thing most sensible? what testimony can be of any validity or use? on that hand therefore the testimony is impregnable, the witnesses cannot be accounted ignorant, or mistaken in the case; for number, or for ability they cannot be excepted against.

It must be therefore only their seriousness, honesty, or fidelity that remains questionable in them; they must be said to have wilfully deceived and imposed upon the world; self-condemned hypocrites, impudent liars and egregious impostors they must have been, if their testimony was false; but that they were not such persons, that they could not, and would not do so, there are inducements to believe as forcible as can be required, or well imagined in any such case.

1. They were persons, who did (with denunciation of most heavy judgments from God on the contrary practices) preach and press constantly and earnestly all kinds of goodness, veracity and sincerity, together with humility, modesty, ingenuity and equity, as main points of that Religion, which they by this testimony confirmed. All their discourses plainly breathed a most serious and sprightly goodness and charity toward men, very inconsistent with a base plot to delude them; their doctrine utterly condemned all malice, all falsehood, craft and hypocrisy, detruing into the bottomless pit all *that love or make a lye*: Consider these sayings and rules of theirs; *As we have opportunity let us do good unto all men; Let your moderation (or equity) be known to all men; Shew all meekness to all men; Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. Putting aside all lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour. Lye not to one another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds. Brethren, be not children in understanding; however in malice be ye children; but in understanding be perfect men.* Such were their precepts discountenancing all malice, and all fraud; propounded in a manner as serious and grave and simple as can be imagined; all the tenour of their doctrine consenting to them: wherein also they earnestly declare against and prohibit all vanity of mind, and perverseness of humour, all affectations of novelty and singularity, all peevish factionousness and turbulency, all fond credulity, stupidity and precipitancy, all instability and giddiness of mind, all such qualities which dispose men without most sure and evident grounds either to introduce or to embrace any new conceits, practices or stories: such was their discourse, nowise founding like the language of impostors, deceit could hardly so disguise or so thwart and supplant it self.

2. Their practice was answerable to their doctrine, exemplary in all sorts of virtue, goodness and sincerity; such indeed whereby they did in effect conciliate much respect, and authority to their words. *Ye are witnesses (they could, appealing to the observers of their demeanour, and to the all-knowing God, say) and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably we behaved our selves among you that believe. And, We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending our selves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Such a lively sense of goodness shining forth in a long course of practice; so to bridle appetites, so to moderate passions, so to eschew all the allurements of pleasure, profit and honour, to bear adversities so calmly and sweetly, to express so much tender-kindness and meekness toward all men, to be continually employed in heavenly discourses and pious works, exhorting men by word, leading them by example to all sorts of goodness indisputably such; to live thus, long and constantly, doth no wise suit unto persons utterly debauched in mind, and of a profligate conscience; who had devised, and did then earnestly drive on the propagation of a vile cheat: The life, I say, they lead was not the life of wicked impostors, but worthy of the divinest men; fit to countenance and carry on the best design, such as they pretended theirs to be.

3. Farther, they were persons of good sense; yea very wise and prudent; not in way of worldly or fleshly wisdom, in skill to contrive or compass projects of gain, honour, or pleasure to themselves, to the commendation of them and of their testimony, they disclaimed being wise or skilful that way; having no practice therein nor caring for it (for they looked not much on things temporal and transitory;

Apoc. 22. 15.
21. 27.
Gal. 6. 10.
Phil. 4. 5.
Tit. 3. 2.

1 Pet. 2. 1.
Eph. 4. 25.
15.
Colos. 3. 9.
1 Cor. 14. 20.
Tit. 2. 7, 8.

1 Theff. 2. 10.

2 Cor. 4. 2, 6.
2 Cor. 2. 17.
Phil. 3. 17.

1 Cor. 1. 20.
2. 5, 6.
2 Cor. 1. 12.
11. 6.

fitory ; they did *not mind earthly things* ; they had not *their conversation*, or inter-
rest here, but *above, as citizens* of another world, deeming themselves as but so-
journers and pilgrims here) but endued they were with a wisdom as in it self far
more excellent, so more suitable to the persons they sustained ; with great perspi-
cacy, and sound judgment in the matters they discoursed about, and in the affairs
they pursued : such their writings, according to acknowledgment of innumerable
most wise and learned persons, fraught with admirable wisdom, and heavenly
Philosophy (rude indeed and simple in expression, but most exact and profound in
sense) do manifest them to have been ; such the tenour of their doctrine evidenced
them, shining with that lustre and beauty, compacted with that strength and har-
mony, that whoever will not confess it to have proceeded from God, must, upon
consideration, however allow, that it could not have been devised by Idiots or
mean persons, but did come from persons of much subtilty and great reach : they
must be no fools who could frame a Religion merely by its own plausibility, with-
out any external help, able presently to supplant all the Religions in the world ;
and to stand durably firm upon the foundations laid by them. Such also the no-
table conduct of their great affair, (notwithstanding so mighty disadvantages and
difficulties) together with the prodigious efficacy their endeavours had upon men,
do evince them to have been : they surely could not be weak men, who in a
plain and peaceable way confounded all the wit and policy, all the learning and
eloquence, all the force and violence that withstood them : Experience did attest
to the truth of what S. Paul saith ; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but*
mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations
and every thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into
captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

4. So were they qualified in their minds ; it must be farther also considered as
to their purposes in this case, that in falsely venting and urging this testimony, they
could not have any design gainful or beneficial to themselves ; but must therein
to no end be mischievous to themselves and others ; abusing others indeed, but
far more harming themselves ; they must be supposed voluntarily to have embrac-
ed all sorts of inconvenience, and designedly to have rendred themselves mise-
rable ; courting adversity, chusing naked and barren evil for its own sake : For
our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile : For neither at
any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is
witness : neither of men sought we glory. Profit, honour, or pleasure (those baits
which entice men to do evil, and set them upon wicked attempts) or any worldly
advantage thence to accrue to themselves they could have no design upon ; for
all those things wittingly and willingly they did abandon ; for the sake of this
very testimony incurring extremities of loss, of disgrace, and of pain : They did
plainly foresee what entertainment their testimony would find, and how in pro-
secution thereof they should be forced to indure all kinds of indignity, of damage,
and of hardship from men ; That in this world they should have tribulation ; that
men should deliver them up to be afflicted, and should kill them ; and that they should
be hated of all nations for his name sake ; their Master expressly had forewarned
them, That all who would live godlily in Christ Jesus (that is, all professors of faith
in him, especially the Teachers thereof) must suffer persecution ; and must through
much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God ; That bonds and imprisonments
did abide them in every place ; That God had set forth the Apostles as appointed unto
death, and exposed them as spectacles of scorn and obloquy to the world ; that
they were called to suffering, and appointed to this very thing, as to their office, and
their portion ; these were the rules and measures they went by ; these the expe-
ctations they had from the world : according unto which it did in effect happen
to them : Even to this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and
have no certain dwelling place ; and labour working with our hands ; being reviled we
bless, being persecuted we suffer it ; being defamed we intreat, we are made as the filth
of the world, and as the off-scouring of all things unto this day : So doth S. Paul
describe the Apostles condition.

5. All these afflictions, as they knowingly did object themselves to for the sake
of this testimony, so they did endure them with contentedness and joy ; when
they had been beaten, they departed rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suf-
fer shame for the name of Jesus ; rejoicing that they were made partakers of Christ's
sufferings ;

Phil. 1. 29. sufferings; deeming it a privilege that was given them not only to believe in him, but to suffer for his name; thinking themselves happy in being reproached for the name of Christ, taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Lord, for whom they suffered the loss of all things.

6. Whence it is evident enough, that the satisfaction of their conscience, and expectation of future reward from God for the discharge of their duty herein, was all the argument which did induce them to undertake this attestation, all the reason that could support them in it; neither of which could be consistent with the resolved maintenance of such a fallhood. They could not indeed but grievously be tormented with remorse in their minds, they could not but dread severe vengeance from heaven, had they been conscious to themselves of so villanous a design of mocking God (whose name and express command they pretended, whose testimony and judgment they appealed to in this affair) and together of abusing the world with such an imposture. Such must have been their inward sense, and such their expectations, had they proceeded with guilty conscience in this business; but they do seriously profess otherwise, and the condition of things might assure us they were in good earnest: *as verum. For this end (saith S. Paul) we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe. And our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world: And, Knowing the fear of the Lord (that is, being sensible of our duty toward God, and fearful of his judgment, if we transgress it) we persuade men; but are made manifest unto God; so they declare what principle it was that moved them to this practice, and the hope encouraging them in it they often express: If (saith they) we suffer with Christ we shall be glorified together with him. And, We always bear about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body. And, It is a faithful saying, if we are dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us. And, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day.* So they profess concerning the grounds and reasons of their maintaining this testimony (and the points connected therewith) with so great present inconvenience to themselves; and the state of things rendreth their profession most credible; for they appear not so blind as not to see those inconveniences, nor so fond as to like them for themselves, or upon no considerable account: they confess, that they should be very stupid and senseless people, if they had incurr'd and underwent all this to no purpose, or without hope of good recompence for it after this life; *If Christ be not risen (saith S. Paul) then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea and we are found false witnesses of God, that he raised up Christ; — then we have only hope in this life; and, If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

7. And how indeed is it conceivable, that such persons should be so bewitched with so passionate an affection, or so mighty a respect toward a poor dead man (one, who was born so obscurely, who lived so poorly, who died so miserably and infamously, as a malefactor; who indeed so died to their knowledge most deservedly, supposing they did know their testimony to be false; one who never was capable to oblige them or to recompence them for their actings or sufferings in any valuable measure) that merely for his sake, or rather not for his sake, but only for a smock of vain opinion about him (which could no-wise profit either him or them) they should with an inflexible obstinacy, defie all the world; expose themselves to all the persecutions of the world, and to all the damnations of hell. S. Paul surely had another opinion of Jesus, when he said, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us; for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; could they, think we, speak thus who knew Jesus to be a wicked deceiver, worthily hated of God and men? No assuredly,*

Acts 19. 28,
34.

Τίς ἔτις ἐμμένει τῇ ταῦτα ἀκού-
πων ὡς φιλοῖς ῥήμασι πειθεῖσαι πει περὶ
μαμάτων τοιούτων; Ibid.

Acts 5. 28.

Matt. 27. 64

Acts 4. 17.
18. 5. 28.

Οὐδ' αὖτις ὅδ' αἰτῶ βοηθείας ἢ τ' ἀλ-
 θείας ἰούσι, ἀλλὰ πᾶν μῦθον ἔχῃ τὸ
 σβηνύμενος αὐτῷ, ἔμῳ μόνον ἐκ ἀφαι-
 ρήτων, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' αὐτῶν ὅτι ἐσπράξαν
 ἐπ' αὐτοῖς τοὺς παλαιότερας καὶ νεώτερας
 ἀνέστη, ἔσ. Chryl. Tom. 5. Oras. 64.

12. As also this testimony had no power to sustain it, so it used no slight to convey it self into the persuasions of men : it did not creep in dark corners, it did not

not grow by clandestine whispers; it craved no blind faith of men: but with a barefaced confidence it openly proclaimed it self, appealing to the common sense ^{1st Thes. 5. 21.} of men, and provoking the world to examine it; daring all adversaries here to confront it, defying all the powers beneath to withstand it; claiming only the patronage of heaven to maintain it.

13. Farthermore, the thing it self had it been counterfeit, was in all probability apt to fall of it self; the witnesses clashing together, or relenting for their crime. That advice of *Gamaliel* had much reason in it; *Refrain* (said he) ^{Acts 5. 9.} *from those men, and let them alone, for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought*; *καταλυθήσεται*, it will of it self be dissolved or destroyed: For how indeed could it be, that among so many confederates in a juggle, not one either checked by conscience, or daunted by hazards, or wearied and worn out by sufferings, should flinch and fall off, so as to detect the plot, disavow his fault, and retire from persecution, but that each one should persist stedfast in so high a strain of vile dissimulation? If one had fallen off, he had certainly spoiled all the plot, opened all mens eyes, and prevented the faith of any one person to the story, and what cement could firmly combine such a pack of men to God, and to all the world, that they should continue invincibly stiff in their faith to one another, and constantly true to so vain a design, good to no man, worst to themselves? that, I say, twelve such persons, every one for a long time, during their whole life, should persevere immovable in so extravagant a resolution of lying, so as by no regrets, or dissatisfactions from within, no threats, no perils, no troubles, or pains from without to be ever driven out of it, but should die with it in their mouths, yea, rejoyce and glory in dying for it; should dying carry it into the presence of God, and dare with it to appear at his judgment; is exceedingly strange and incredible: It must therefore surely be truth alone that could set them on this design, and could uphold them steady in it; so unanimous a consent, so clear a confidence, so firm a resolution; so insuperable a constancy and patience nothing but a sense of truth could inspire men with, nothing but a perfectly good conscience could sustain. Possible it is, that in matters of speculation and subtilty men upon slender grounds may be peremptorily opinionative, and desperately pertinacious; (this experience sheweth): but in a matter of this nature (a matter of plain fact, and gross sense) none can well be imagined (none especially so qualified, in such circumstances, to such purposes can be imagined) to be so wretchedly stupid, or desperately obstinate.

14. He then who doubts of the sincerity of these Witnesses, or rejects their testimony as incredible, must instead of it admit of divers stranger incredibilities; refusing his faith to one fact, devious from the natural course of things, but very ^{Aug. de Civ. D. 22. 5.} feasible to God; he must thence allow it to many others, repugnant to the nature of man, and to the course of humane things; performed without God, yea against him. It is credible that persons otherwise through all their lives strictly blameless, and rigidly virtuous (even in the most heavenly parts of goodness, in humanity, meekness, peaceableness, humility and patience) should against clearest dictates of conscience, peremptorily and perseveringly commit so palpable villany, as to broach and propagate such an imposture; that they, all whose demeanours and discourses evidently did tend to the advancement of God's glory, and promoting goodness, should so in their hearts utterly despise God, and detest goodness; or that persons in a strain incomparably solemn and serious should so plainly teach, so strongly press, so otherwise uniformly practise highest good will and beneficence toward all men, while they were with all their mind and might striving to gull and abuse men? Is it conceivable, that men otherwise in all their actions so wise, and well advised (able to manage and to perform so great matters) should so zealously drive on a most vain and senseless project, with more unwearied industry labouring to maintain, and disperse a lye, than any men beside did ever strive in behalf of truth? Is it not marvellous that men in all respects so impotent, without any arms or aids, should adventure on so high an enterprize, should with so happy success achieve it; that naked weakness should boldly assault, and thoroughly over-power the greatest might; pure simplicity should contest with and baffle sharpest wit, subtle policy, and deepest learning; that rude speech (void of strength or ornament) should effectually persuade an uncouth and unpleasant tale, against all the finest, and strongest Rhetorick in the world? Is it not strange that

a crew of vile and base persons should so inseparably be linked together with no other hands, than deceit and dishonesty ; no truth, no virtue, no common interest helping to combine, or contain them together ? Is it to be believed that men of sense should *gratis*, for no considerable end or advantage, voluntarily embrace and patiently endure all that is distastful to humane nature, freely exposing themselves they knew not why, only for the sake of a story, to the fury of earth and flames of hell ; eagerly sacrificing their fortunes, credits, lives, and souls themselves to the Ghost of a forlorn wretch, and infamous caitiff ? Is it not in fine prodigious, that so implausible a fallhood upon all greatest disadvantages should encounter, vanquish and triumph over truth ; these are incredibilities indeed, able to choak any man's faith ; yet he that rejects this testimony must swallow and digest them, together with others like them of as hard concoction.

Acts 2. 43.

5. 12.

Acts 14. 3.

19. 11.

Acts 4. 33.

Heb. 2. 4.

Ἀμύχανον ὁ

ἀνδραγαθίαν

ἐργάσθαι

δύναται

ἡ πόλις.

Chryl. in Act. 1. 2.

Vid. in 1 Cor. Or. 5.

Si per Apostolos

sine ullis miraculis credidit.

15. To these things we may add, that God himself did signally countenance, and ratify this testimony ; not only by conferring on the avowers thereof extraordinary graces (invincible courage, irresistible wisdom, indefatigable industry, inflexible constancy and patience, admirable self-denial, meekness, charity, temperance, and all virtues in an eminent degree) not only farther by a wonderful success and blessing bestowed upon their endeavours ; but by enduing them with supernatural gifts, and enabling them to perform miraculous works openly and frequently ; So that by the hands of the Apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people — The Lord giving testimony unto the word of his grace, and granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands ; so that with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all ; (that is, there was a great appearance of the divine favour toward them, and of the divine operation in and by them) Yielding which kind of attestation was the ancient and usual method of God in authorizing his messengers, and approving the declaration of his mind by them ; (the Seal as it were put to the Letters credential from heaven) nor could God afford more convincing signs than these of his approbation to any person or design : that God did thus *ἀνταρτυρεῖν* attest (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) together with these Witnesses, if the Apostolical history (bearing in it all the characters of a simple, faithful and upright narration) did not relate ; yet the effect of this testimony, so speedily and easily prevailing every where, would render it highly probable, since in likelihood, no humane endeavour, without divine assistance, could accomplish a business so great and difficult : if they did no miracles, *ἡ δὲ πόλις ἐμύχον*, this (as S. Chrysostome says) was the greatest miracle that could be, that such a testimony should without any miracle prevail.

Chryl. in Act. 1. 2. Vid. in 1 Cor. Or. 5.
Si per Apostolos — ista miracula facta esse non credunt, hoc nobis unum grande miraculum est, quod ea terrarum orbis sine ullis miraculis credidit. Aug. de Civ. D. 22. 5.

16. Now for conclusion, all these things being considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that this testimony is above all exception ; that no matter of fact ever had, or well could have in any considerable respect, a more valid and certain proof : the greatest affairs in the world (concerning the rights and reputations, the estates and the lives of men) are decided by testimonies in all regards less weighty ; so that to refuse it, is in effect to decline all proof by testimony, to renounce all certainty in humane affairs, to remove the grounds of proceeding securely in any business, or administration of justice ; to impeach all history of fabulousness, to charge all mankind with insufficiency, or extreme infidelity (for if these persons were not able, or not honest enough, what men can ever be supposed such ; who can by greater arguments assure their ability, or their integrity in reporting any thing ?) to thrust God himself away from bearing credible attestation in any case (for in what case did he ever or can he be conceived to yield an attestation more full or plain, than he did in this ? what farther can he perform needful to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity, or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition, unreasonably and unworthily incredulous ?) in fine, to distrust this testimony is therefore in effect to embrace the vanity of the most wanton or wicked Sceptick.

The Use of all is in short this, that he should heartily thank God for so clear and strong an assurance of the truth of our Faith ; that we therefore firmly embrace

brace it, and steadily persevere therein; that we obey it, and bear fruits worthy thereof in our practice; that so doing we may obtain the blissful rewards which upon those terms it propoundeth and promiseth: That we may all so do, God of his mercy grant, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The third day he rose again, &c.

S E R M O N XXX.

LUKE XXIV. 46.

And he said unto them, Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.



THE words of men leaving this world (as proceeding from a depth of serious concernedness, and influenced by a special providence) are usually attended with great regard, and a kind of veneration; these are such, even the words of our departing Lord; the which therefore deserve and demand our best consideration.

They respect two points of grand importance, the passion and the resurrection of our Lord; of which I shall only now consider the latter, as being most agreeable to the present season: and whereas there be divers particulars observable in them, I shall confine my discourse to *one*, being the main point; couched in those words, *thus it behoved*; which import the needfulness, and expediency of our Lord's resurrection: Of which I shall endeavour first to declare the truth, then to shew the usefulness, by a practical application thereof.

The resurrection of our Lord may appear to have been needful and expedient, upon several good accounts.

1. It was needful to illustrate the veracity, wisdom and providence of God, by making good what he had signified in the ancient Scriptures concerning it; either in mystical adumbrations, or by express predictions; understood according to those infallible expositions, which the Apostles did receive from the instruction of our Lord, or from illumination of that Spirit which dictated the Scriptures: the particular instances, as being obvious, and requiring large discourse, I now forbear to mention.

2. It was needful in congruity to other events foretold, and in order to the accomplishment of those designs which our Lord was to manage: the whole œconomy and harmony of the Evangelical dispensation, as it is represented by the Prophets, doth require it: It was, according to their predictions, designed, that Christ should erect a spiritual Kingdom, and administer it for ever, with perfect equity, in great peace and prosperity; that he should in our behalf atchieve glorious exploits, subduing all the adversaries of our salvation, (*sin, death and hell*;) that he should establish a new Covenant, upon better promises, of another eternal

most happy life, assuring to the embracers thereof an entire reconciliation and acceptance with God; that he should convert the world to faith in God, and observance of his will: In execution of these purposes, it was declared that he should undergo suffering, and be put to death in a most disgraceful and painful manner: It consequently must be supposed, that from such a death he should conspicuously and wonderfully be restored to life; how otherwise could it appear, that he did reign in glory, that he had obtained those great victories, that he had vanquished death, that the former curses were voided, God appeased, and mankind restored to favour by him? Had the grave swallowed him up, had God left his soul in hell, had he rested under the dominion of common mortality, had he after his dismal passions no evidence of special favour toward him shone forth; What ground had there been to believe those great things? Who would have been persuaded of them? The Scripture therefore, which foretelleth the sufferings of our Lord, and the glories following them; which saith, that having drunk of the brook in the way he should lift up his head; that when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he should prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand; that because he had poured out his soul unto death, God would divide him a portion with the great, and he should divide the spoil with the strong; that unto him whom man despised, to him whom the nation abhorred, Kings should look and arise, Princes should worship; the Scripture, I say, foretelling these events, doth consequentially imply the needfulness of his resurrection.

1 Pet. i. 11.

Luke 24. 26.

Psal. 110. 7.

Isa. 53. 10, 12.

Isa. 49. 7.

3. It was requisite in it self; or in respect to the many great ends for which it serveth, and the excellent fruits, which it is apt to produce: as will appear by reflecting on those, which are suggested in the *New Testament*.

I pass by its particular usefulness in regard to our Lord's *Apostles* and *Disciples*; its serving to reinforce their faith, and rear their hopes, being staggered by his passion; to comfort them in those sorrowful apprehensions, and despondencies of heart, which arose from the frightful events befalling him; to enlighten their minds by more perfect instruction, removing their ignorance, and reforming their mistakes concerning him, and the things of his kingdom; to furnish them with instructions and orders requisite for managing the employments committed to them; to arm them by consolatory discourses and gracious promises of support against the difficulties, hazards and troubles they were to encounter, in the profession and propagation of his doctrine; in fine, by all his admirable deportment with them, and his miraculous departure from them to confirm them in their faith, and encourage them in their duty: these particular uses, I say, we shall pass over, insisting only upon those more common ends and effects in which our selves and all Christians are more immediately concerned.

4. A general end of it was the production and corroboration of faith in us concerning all the Doctrines of our Religion; for that by it the truth of all our Lord's declarations concerning his own person, his offices, his power, his precepts and his promises (to the highest pitch of conviction and satisfaction) was assured; it being hardly possible, that any miracle could be greater in it self for confirmation of the whole, or more proper for ascertaining the parts of our Religion. But more particularly;

Μάλιστα πάντων σημείων ἐκείνου ὃ τὸς ἀγαθόντων ὅσοις ἐμίσεν. Chrys. in Rom. i. 4.

5. First, From it the dignity of our Lord's person, and his especial dearnefs to God (to the voidance of all exceptions, and surmises against him) did appear.

John 7. 24.

If the meanness of his birth and parentage, if the low garb and dim lustre of his life, if the bitter pains and shameful disgraces of his death (however accompanied with rare qualities shining in him, and wonderful deeds achieved by him) in persons standing at distance, casting superficial glances on things, and judging by external appearances, might breed disadvantageous apprehensions, or suspicions concerning him, whether he were indeed as he pretended, the Son of God, designed by him to be the Saviour of mankind, the Lord of all things, the Judge of the world; the wonderful power, and signal favour of God demonstrated in his resurrection, served to discuss those mists, and to correct such mistakes, evincing those temporary depressions to have been only dispensations preparatory toward his greater exaltation in dignity, and apparent favour with God; for though (saith S. Paul) he was crucified out of weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God; that is, although in his sufferings the infirmity of our nature assumed by him was discovered, yet by his recovering life the divine power attending him was eminently

2 Cor. 13. 4.

nently declared; it was indeed an excessive grandeur of power, an energy of the might of strength, which God did exert in the raising of Christ from the dead, as the Apostle laboureth to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle; and being so high an instance of power, it was consequently a special mark of favour; God not being lavish of such miracles, or wont to stretch forth his arm in behalf of any person, to whom he doth not bear extraordinary regard: the which consequence also, by reflecting on the circumstances, and nature of this event, will farther appear.

He was persecuted and put to death as a notorious malefactor, and an enemy to God, to true Religion, to the common peace, to goodness; and his being delivered up to suffer was an enforcement of that pretence; for his adversaries thence did argue, that God had disavowed, and deserted him; they insulted over him as one in a forlorn condition, esteeming him (as the Prophets foretold) stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: but God thus, by his own hand, undoing what they had done against him, did plainly confute their reasonings, did evidence their accusations to be false, and their surmises vain, did in opposition to their suggestions approve him a friend and favourite of God, a patron of truth, a maintainer of piety and peace; one meriting, because obtaining, the singular countenance and succour of God.

And if yielding our Lord over to death (which being a total incapacity of enjoying any good, doth signify an extremely bad state) might imply God's displeasure or disregard toward him; (as indeed it did in a sort, he standing in our room to undergo the inflictions of divine wrath and justice;) then answerably restoring him to life (which, as the foundation of enjoying any good, doth represent the best condition) must demonstrate a singular tenderness of affection, with a full approbation and acceptance of his performances: this indeed far more pregnantly doth argue favour, than that could imply displeasure; for that may happen to the best men upon other grounds, this can bear no other than a favourable interpretation.

Farther, to give life doth ground that relation, which is deepest in nature, and importeth most affection; whence in the Holy stile, to raise up to life, is termed to beget; and the regeneration is put for the resurrection; so that it being a paternal act, signifieth a paternal regard: and thence perhaps S. Paul telleth us, that our Lord was declared, or defined to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead.

6. Secondly, By our Lord's resurrection we may be assured concerning the efficacy of his undertakings for us: for considering it we may not doubt of God's being reconciled to us: of obtaining the pardon of our sins, and acceptance of our persons, of receiving all helps conducive to our sanctification, of attaining final happiness, in case we are not on our parts deficient; all those benefits by our Lord's resurrection, as a certain seal, being ratified to us, and in a manner conferred on us.

As God, in the death of our Lord, did manifest his wrath toward us, and execute his justice upon us; so in raising him thence correspondently God did express himself appeased, and his law to be satisfied; as we in his suffering were punished (the iniquity of us all being laid upon him) so in his resurrection we were acquitted and restored to grace; as Christ did merit the remission of our sins, and the acceptance of our persons by his passion; so God did consign them to us in his resurrection; it being that formal act of grace, whereby, having sustained the brunt of God's displeasure, he was solemnly reinstated in favour, and we representatively, or virtually in him; so that (supposing our due qualifications, and the performances requisite on our parts) we thence become compleatly justified, having not only a just title to what justification doth import, but a real instatement therein; confirmed by the resurrection of our Saviour; whence He was (saith S. Paul) delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; and who then (saith the same Apostle) shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth; Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen again: Our justification and absolution, are (ye see) rather ascribed to the resurrection of Christ, than to his death; for that indeed his death was a ground of bestowing them; but his resurrection did accomplish the collation of them, for since (doth the Apostle argue) God hath acknowledged satisfaction

faction done to his justice, by discharging our surety from restraint, and from all farther prosecution; since in a manner so notorious, God hath declared his favour toward our proxy: What pretence can be alledged against us, what suspicion of displeasure can remain? Had Christ only died, we should not have been condemned, our punishment being already undergone; yet had we not been fully discharged, without that express warrant and acquittance, which his rising doth

1 Cor. 15. 7.

imply; so again may S. Paul be understood to intimate, when he saith, *If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins*: Death (or that obligation

Heb. 2. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 10.
Rom. 8. 3. 5. 18. 6. 23.
1 Cor. 15. 14.

Morte calcata surrexit. Hier. Ep.
129.

1 Cor. 5. 21.

Διὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν τοῦ θανάτου περὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν.
Chryl. Rom. 1. 4.
Τὸν οὐ κατέλιπον ἐαυτὸν συνανέστην.
Chryl. Tom. 5. Or. 84.
Dominus sua resurrectione pignore vincula solvit inferni, &c. Amb. ad Grat.
Per resurrectionem Christi & mors interitum, & vita accepit initium. Leo M. Ep. 81.

to die, to which we did all for our transgressions stand devoted) was *condemned*, and judicially *abolished* by his death; but it was executed and expunged in his resurrection; in which *trampling thereon* he crushed it to nothing; wherefore therein mankind revived, and received *the gift of immortality*; that being a clear pledge, and full security, that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*: He (saith S. Chrysostome) by his resurrection dissolved the *tyranny of death*, and with himself raised up the whole world: By the pledge of his resurrection (saith S. Ambrose) he loosed the bands of hell: Thereby (saith S. Leo) death received its destruction, and life its beginning: Therein not only the natural body of Christ was raised, but the mystical body also, each member of his Church was restored to life, being

thoroughly rescued from the bondage of corruption, and translated into a state of

Eph. 2. 5, 6.
Rom. 8. 21.

immortality; so that God (saith S. Paul) hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Hence in our Baptism (wherein justification, and a title to eternal life are exhibited to us) as the death and burial of Christ are symbolically undergone by us;

Colof. 2. 13,
14.

so therein also we do interpretatively rise with him; being (saith S. Paul) buried with Christ in Baptism, in it we are also raised together with him; and Baptism

1 Pet. 3. 21.

(S. Peter telleth us) being the antitype of the passage through the flood, doth save us by the resurrection of Christ, presented therein.

It also ministrerth hopes of spiritual aid, sufficient for the sanctification of our hearts and lives; for that he, who raised our Lord from a natural death, thence doth appear both able and willing to raise us from a spiritual death, or from that mortal slumber in trespasses and sins, in which naturally we do lie buried, to walk in that newness of life to which the Gospel calleth us; and in regard to which, God (saith S. Peter) having raised his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning everyone of us from his iniquities.

Eph. 2. 10.
Apoc. 20. 6.
Acts 3. 26.

The same consequently is a sure earnest of our salvation; for, If (saith S. Paul) when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Rom. 5. 10.
1 Pet. 3. 21.

7. Thirdly, By our Lord's resurrection, the verity of his doctrines, and the validity of his promises concerning the future state of men are demonstrated; in a

(Joh. 20. 31.)

way most cogent, and most pertinent: Any miracle, notoriously true, doth indeed suffice to confirm any point of good doctrine; but a miracle in kind, or involving the matter contested, hath a peculiar efficacy to that purpose: So did our Lord's resurrection, in way of palpable instance, with all possible evidence to sense, directly prove the possibility of our resurrection, together with all points of doctrine coherent thereto; (the substantial distinction of our soul from the body, its separate existence after the dissolution, and consequently its immortal nature, God's wise and just providence over humane affairs in this state, the scrutiny and judgment of our actions hereafter, with dispensation of recompences answerable;) those fundamental ingredients of religion, most powerful incentives to virtue, and most effectual discouragements from vice; the which (before much liable to doubt and dispute, little seen in the darkness of natural reason, and greatly clouded in the uncertainty of common tradition) as our Lord by his do-

2 Tim. 1. 10.
Acts 26. 23.

ctrine, first brought into clear light, so by his resurrection he fully did shew that light to be sincere and certain: Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory were all the arguments, which the most careful speculation could produce, for asserting those important verities, in comparison to that one sensible experiment attesting to them: For if our Lord, a man as our selves, did arise from the dead (his soul, which

which

which from the cross descended into the invisible mansions, returning into his body) then evidently our souls are distinct from our bodies, and capable of subsistence by themselves; then are they apt to exist perpetually; then may they be put to render an account for what is acted here, and accordingly may be dealt with: Hence may we see, that S. Paul discoursed reasonably, when he told the *Athenians*, that, *Now God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained, exhibiting an argument most persuasive to all, having raised him from the dead*; that S. Peter also might well aver, that *God hath regenerated us to a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*.

Particularly the resurrection of our bodies, restoring our perfect manhood to us (a point wholly new to the world, which no Religion had embraced, no reason could descry) was hereby so exemplified, that considering it, we can hardly be tempted to doubt of what the Gospel teacheth about it; that he preceding as the *first-born from the dead*, and the *first-fruits of them which sleep*, as our fore-runner, and the *Captain of life*; we, in our due rank and season, as younger sons of the resurrection, as serving under his command and conduct, in resemblance and conformity to him, shall follow; so that, *If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwelleth in us; he that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in us*; that, *If we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also grow up in the likeness of his resurrection*; that, *As we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*; so that *God, who raised our Lord, shall also raise us by his power*; for we cannot but allow that consequence to be reasonable, which S. Paul doth imply, when he saith, *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again; even so them also, which sleep through Jesus, will God bring with him*, reducing them into a state conformable to his; by re-union of their body and soul.

8. Fourthly, It was a designed consequence of our Lord's resurrection, that he thereby should acquire a just dominion over us; for, to this end (saith S. Paul) *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*: By the obedience of his death he did earn that dominion, as a worthy recompence thereof; He did by his blood purchase us to be his subjects and servants; but from his resurrection he began to possess that reward, and to enjoy his purchase; it being the first step of his advancement to that royal dignity and preeminence over all flesh; to which, in regard to his sufferings, God did exalt him; concerning which, before his ascension, he said to his disciples, *All power is given me in heaven and earth*: On so many great accounts was our Lord's resurrection beneficial; so that it is no wonder, if God took such special care to assure its truth, and recommend its belief to us; appointing so many choice persons by their testimony to assert, and inculcate it; to do so being often expressed a main part, and peculiar design of the office Apostolical. Nor is it strange, that to the hearty belief, and ingenuous profession of this one Article (it enfolding, or inferring the truth of all other Christian doctrines) salvation is annexed, according to that assertion of S. Paul; *The righteousness of faith saith thus* (or this is the purport of the Christian Institution) *that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart, that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*. Nor is it much, that a consideration of this point should be so continually present to the minds of the ancient Christians, that when ever they did meet, they should be ready to salute one another with a *Χαίρετε ἀδελφοί, Χρὶς ἐστὶν ἠγέρθη*, *Christ is risen*, it importing so great benefits, and producing so excellent fruits; in regard whereto S. Paul expresseth his so ardent desire, and high esteem of *knowing Christ, and the power of his resurrection*; as the most valuable of all knowledges; which having in some measure declared, I come now briefly to apply.

1. First then, The consideration of our Lord's resurrection should strengthen our faith, and quicken our hope in God, causing us firmly to believe his word, and confidently to rely upon his promises, especially those which concern our future state. God having thereby, as by a most sensible proof, against all objections

Credentes resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credimus, propter quos & ille obiit & resurrexit. Tert. de Pat. 9.

Resurrectionem carnis per semetipsum primus iniuravit. Cyp. Ep. 73.

Apoc. 1. 5. Col. 1. 18.

1 Cor. 15. 20.

Acts 3. 15. 5. 31.

Heb. 6. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 23.

Luke 20. 36.

Rom. 8. 11.

Rom. 6. 5.

1 Cor. 15. 22.

1 Cor. 6. 14.

1 Thess. 4. 14.

John 17. 2.

Phil. 2. 9.

Matt. 28. 18.

Acts 1. 22.

10. 41. 13.

31.

Rom. 10. 6, 9.

Phil. 3. 10.

of our feeble reason, demonstrated himself able, as by a most sure pledge declared himself willing to bestow upon us a happy immortality, in gracious reward of our obedience: for seeing by so illustrious an instance, God hath manifested that he is thoroughly reconcileable to sinners, that he bountifully rewardeth obedience, that death and hell are vincible, What reason can we have to distrust his fidelity, to doubt of his power, or to despair of his mercy? Surely, He that was so faithful in raising our Lord from the grave, so notably rewarding his obedience and patience (in advancing him to Supreme dignity and glory at his right hand) will not fail also to confer on us (walking in the footsteps of his piety) the promised inheritance of everlasting life and bliss, the never fading crown of righteousness and glory: Surely, by this noble experiment we are clearly informed, and should be fully persuaded, that nothing can destroy us, nothing can harm us, nothing can separate us from our God, and our happiness; that no force, no fraud, no spite of men, or rage of hell can finally prevail against us; What then reasonably can be dreadful, or discouraging to us? What should be able to drive us into distrust, or despair?

2. This point affordeth matter of great joy, and an obligation thereto. If the news of our Saviour's first birth were (as an *Angel* called 'em) *good tidings of great joy to all people*, how much more may the news concerning this second nativity of him be hugely gladfome? for in that birth he did but assume our flesh, in this he did advance it; then he began to sustain our infirmities, now he surmounted them; by 1 Cor. 15. 57. his incarnation he became *subject to death*, by his resurrection death was subdued to him; at that he entred into the field, and set upon the bloody conflict with our foes; in this he returned a triumphant conquerour, having utterly vanquished and quelled them; the fury of the world, the malice of hell, the tyranny of sin, the Empire of death, all of them combined to render us miserable, he did in his resurrection perfectly triumph over; And doth it not then become us to attend his glorious victories with our joyful gratulations? Is it not extremely comfortable to behold our gallant champion (the only champion of our life and welfare) after all the cruel blows

Σήμερον ἡμῶν τὰ λαμπρὰ νικητήρια
χρῶν σήμερον ἡμῶν ὁ δισπότης τὸ καὶ δὴ
νῦν τετρακαὶ ὅσας. καὶ τὸ διαβόλου τῶν
πυρρῶν ἰδὲ καὶ τῶν δαίμονων διὰ τὴν ἀνάστα-
σιν ἡμῶν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐχάρισατο.

Ἡ ποδηνὴ καὶ σωτήριος ἑορτὴ — ἡ τὴν
αἰρήν καὶ ἀποθνήσκειν ἢ τὴν κατὰ λαλῶντες ἀπο-
μὴν ἢ τὴν πολλὰ μὲν ἀνασῶν, ἢ τὴν δὴ δυνά-
μις καὶ αὐτοῦ. ἢ τὸν διαβόλου ἡττῶν —
Chrys. 1. 5. Orat. 85.

which the infernal powers laid on him, after all the Ghastly wounds which humane madness did inflict; after he had passed through the scorching flames of divine wrath and justice, after he had felt the forest pangs of death, perfectly recovered from all those distresses; standing upright, and trampling on the necks of his proud enemies? Are not most sprightly expressions of gratitude, are not most cheerful acclamations of praise due from us to the invincible *Captain of our salvation*? Shall we not with great alacrity of mind contemplate the happy success of that mighty enterprize, wherein no less our welfare, than his glory was concerned? Is it not a pleasure to consider our selves so exempted from that fatal doom, to which all humane race was sentenced; to see life and immortality so springing forth upon us; to view our selves the children of dust and corruption, from hence in age and dignity, so nigh equalled to the first-born sons of the creation?

Luke 24. 41.

Quod credunt tardius, non est perfidia,
sed amoris. Chrysost. Serm. 81.

It is said of the first disciples, that although they saw, and felt our Lord risen, yet *for joy they could not believe it*; so incredibly good was the news to them; excess of love and delight choaked, or rather suspended their faith; we cannot be such infidels from surprize, but let us be as faithful in our joy.

3. Great consolation surely it ought to breed in us, to consider, that by this event our redemption is compleated, and we become entirely capable of salvation; that in it a full discharge is exhibited from the guilt, and from the punishment of all our sins, whereof we do truly repent; that God's justice appeareth satisfied, and his anger pacified; that his countenance shineth out clearly with favour and mercy toward us; that our condemnation is reversed, our ransom is accepted, our shackles are loosed, and our prison set open; so that with full liberty, security and hope, we may walk forward in the paths of righteousness toward our better country, the Region of eternal felicity. Farther,

4. This consideration should be a forcible engagement upon us to obedience and a holy life. Our Lord did by his resurrection gain a dominion over us, un-
to

to which if we do not submit, we shall be very injurious and wicked ; unto which if we do not correspond by all humble observance, we shall be very ingrateful and undutiful : *He was raised to bless us, in turning every one of us from* Acts 3. 26. *our iniquities ; and no less unhappy, than unworthy we shall be, if we defeat that gracious purpose : It is the condition of our obtaining the happy fruits and benefits of his resurrection, that we should our selves rise with him unto righteous-* Rom. 6. 4. *ness and newness of Life ; by not complying therewith, we shall render his Resurrection unprofitable to us, becoming unworthy and incapable of any good advantage thereby. Awake (saith the Apostle) thou that sleepest, and arise from the* Eph. 5. 14. *dead, and Christ shall give thee life. To awake from our spiritual slumber, to arise from dead works, are the terms on which Christ doth offer that eternal happy life : for as the pains and ignominies of his death will no-wise avail those, who are not conformable to his death in dying to sin, and mortifying their Lusts, so* Phil. 3. 10. *will not they be concerned in the joys and glories of his Resurrection, who are* Rom. 6. 5. *not planted in the likeness thereof by renovation of their minds, and reformation of their lives ; for as he died, so he was also raised for us, that we should not* 2 Cor. 5. 15. *henceforth live to our selves, but unto him who died and rose again for us. Our sins did slay him, it must be our repentance that reviveth him to us, our obedience that maketh him to live in our behalf : for Christ is not in effect risen to impenitent people ; as they continue dead in trespasses and sins, as they lie buried in corruption of heart and life, so their condemnation abideth, and Death retaineth its entire power over them ; they shall not* *unto that happy Resurrection, whereof our Lord's Resurrection was the pledge and pattern ; so did our Lord assure in his Preaching : He (said our Lord) that be-* John 3. 36. *lieveth in the Son (that is, who with a sincere, strong and lively faith, productive* 15. *of due obedience, believeth in him) hath everlasting life ; but ;* *disobeyeth (or with a practical infidelity disbelieveth) the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him ; whence we may well infer with S. Paul, Therefore, Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh : for if we* Rom. 8. 13. *live after the flesh, we shall die ; but if through the spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live ; that is, assuredly by obeying God's Will we shall obtain, by disobedience we must forfeit all the benefits of our Lord's Resurrection.*

¶ 5. Lastly, The contemplation of this Point should elevate our thoughts and affections unto Heaven and heavenly things, above the sordid Pleasures, the fading Glories, and the unstable Possessions of this World : for *him we should fol-* Rev. 14. 4. *low whithersoever he goeth ; rising with him, not only from all sinful Desires, but* Eph. 2. 6. *from all inferiour Concernments, soaring after him in the contemplation of our minds, and affections of our heart ; that although we are absent from the Lord in* 2 Cor. 5. 6. *the body, we may be present with him in spirit, having our conversation in Heaven,* Phil. 1. 23. *and our heart there where our treasure is ; for if our Souls do still grovel on the* 3. 20. *earth, if they be closely affixed to worldly interests, deeply immersed in sensual delights, utterly enslaved to corruption, we do not partake of our Lord's Resur-* 2 Pet. 2. 19. *rection, being quite severed from his living Body, and continuing in vast distance* Rom. 8. 21. *from him : I shall therefore conclude, recommending that admonition of S. Paul ;* (Gal. 6. 8. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth* Apoc. 3. 1. *on the right hand of God ; set your affections on things above, not on things on the* 1 Tim. 5. 6. *earth ; for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God ; that when Christ* Col. 3. 1. *who is our life shall appear, then ye may also appear with him in glory. Amen.*

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand, &c.

SERMON XXXI.

MARK XVI. 19.

He was received up into Heaven, and sate on the right hand of God.



OUR Lord after his Resurrection having consummated what was requisite to be done by him upon earth, for the confirmation of our Faith, and the constitution of his Church; having for a competent time conversed with his Disciples, enlightning their minds with knowledge of the truths concerning him, and in right understanding of the Scriptures relating to him; establishing their faith in immovable conviction, enflaming their affections by pathetical discourse, comforting their minds with gracious promises against tribulations ensuing, and arming their hearts with courage and patience against all oppositions of Earth and Hell; directing and prescribing to them how they should proceed in the instruction of men, and conversion of the world to the belief of his doctrine, the acceptance of his overtures, the observance of his laws; furnishing them with authority, and giving them orders to attest the truth concerning him, to dispense the grace and mercy procured by him, and to promulgate the whole will of God to mankind; promising them spiritual gifts and aids (both ordinary and extraordinary) necessary or conducive, either to the common edification, or to the particular welfare of Christians, ordering them to collect and compact the society of faithful Believers in him, which *he had purchased with his Blood*; in fine, imparting to them his effectual benediction, and a promise of continual assistance in the prosecution of those great and holy designs which he committed to their management; having, I say, accomplished all these things, which St. Mark in this *verse* expresseth briefly by the words *μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς*, after he had spoken to them, and which S. Luke compriseth in the words *ἐνταλάσας αὐτοῖς*, that is, having imparted to them all needful instructions, and imposed all fitting commands upon them, He in their presence departed away into the possession of his glorious state; *He was* (saith S. Mark in our Text) *received up into Heaven, and sate on the right hand of God.*

Acts 1. 2.

Which words of the *Evangelist* do contain two grand points of our Faith, the *ascension of our Lord to Heaven*, and his *session there at God's right hand*; the right understanding and due consideration whereof [as it is now peculiarly, when the Church recommendeth these points to be the subjects of our devotion most seasonable, so perpetually] is of great use for the edification of our souls, and the direction of our practice: in order to which purposes, I shall endeavour to explain them, to confirm the truth of them, to shew the ends and effects of them, and practically to apply them.

I. *He was received into Heaven*; this is the *first point*: wherein we may observe the *act*, and its *term*: The *act*, *ἀνελήφθη*, he was assumed, or *taken up* (saith S. Mark here) *ἀνελήφθη*, he was elevated or *carried up*, and *ἐνέσθη*, he was *born up* (saith S. Luke) *ἐνέσθη*, he went into Heaven, saith S. Peter; which phrases do import that he was according to his humanity (or that his body and soul united together were) translated by the divine power into Heaven; or that he as God (by the divine power immanent

Luke 24. 51.

Acts 1. 9.

1 Pet. 3. 22.

immanent in him) did transfer himself as man thither ; so that he both was carried, and did go with a proper local motion, the term whereof was Heaven

And what is meant by *Heaven*, in the proper sense adequate to this matter, may appear from other places equivalent, by which this action, or the result thereof are expressed : it is called *ascending to his Father*, and *passing out of this world to his Father*, that is, departing hence into the place of God's more especial presence and residence ; where he (as the *Apostle to the Hebrews* saith) *appeareth to the face of God* ; being (as *S. Peter* speaketh) *exalted to the right hand of God* (that is to the greatest proximity, and therefore highest eminency with God.) It is termed being *taken up into glory*, and *entering into his glory*, that is, into a most glorious place, and state peculiar to him ; that place, which *S. Peter* calleth, *the magnificent, or most excellent glory*. It is stiled *entering*, into the most inward part behind the veil ; and into the especially holy places ; that is, into the inmost recesses of glory, inaccessible, and in degree incommunicable to any other. He is said to have *passed through the Heavens* (that is, through all places inferiour to the highest top of glory and felicity) to have *ascended over above all the Heavens*, to have *become higher than the Heavens*, or advanced above them ; by which expressions it appeareth, that the term of our Saviour's ascent, called *Heaven* here, was that place of all places in the *Universe* of things in situation most eminent, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most illustrious ; the inmost sanctuary of God's temple above not made with hands ; the most august chamber of presence in the Celestial Court : and whereas there are (as our Lord telleth us) *many mansions*, or apartments in the house of God, the chief and best of them our Lord hath taken up for his residence ; whereas Heaven is a place of vast extent, to the utmost top thereof our Lord hath ascended ; even into that inaccessible Light where God dwelleth.

And there, as it followeth, *He sitteth at God's right hand* ; the meaning of which words it is not difficult to find out ; it being obvious and clear, that the state of things above in the other blessed world, is in the Scripture represented to us by that similitude, which is most apt to beget in us reverence toward God, and which indeed really doth most resemble it ; by the state of a King here, sitting upon his Throne, being surrounded with Personages of highest rank, worth, and respect ; his nearest Relations, his dearest Favourites, the chief Officers of his Crown, and Ministers of his affairs there attending upon him : so that yet for distinction, some place more eminent, and signally honourable, is assigned to that person, to whom the King pleaseth to declare most especial favour and regard ; the which place by custom, grounded upon obvious reason, hath been of old, and continueth still determined to the next place at the right hand ; (the next place, because nearness yieldeth opportunity for all kind of conversation and address ; at the right hand, because that hand hath advantage for strength and activity acquired by use, and therefore hath a special aptitude to offer any thing, or to receive, as occasion doth require) hence for instance of the custom among those from whom the phrase is taken, when *Bathsheba* King *Solomon's* Mother did come unto him, 'tis said, *The King sate down upon his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the King's Mother, and she sate on his right hand*. Thus, our Lord, as Man, in regard to his perfect obedience and patience, being raised by God to the supreme pitch of favour, honour and power with him ; God having advanced him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins ; having superexalted him, and bestowed on him a name above all names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, and under the earth must bow ; having seated him in heavenly places above all principality and authority, and power, and dominion, and name that is named, either in the present world, or in that which is to come ; having committed to him all authority in heaven and upon earth, and given all things into his hand ; having constituted him heir of all things, and subjected all things under his feet, and crowned him with Sovereign Glory and Honour ; having, in fine, given unto him all that which in the *Revelation* the innumerable host of Heaven acknowledgeth him worthy of ; Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing ; that is, all good and excellency conceivable in the most eminent degree, so that he in all things becometh to have the preeminence : God having, I say, conferred all these preeminences of dignity,

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power,

Eph. 1. 20.
Matth. 26.
64.
Mar. 14. 62.
Lu. 22. 69.

power, favour and felicity upon our Saviour, is therefore said to have *seated him at his right hand*; *at the right hand of power* (say the Gospels) that is, so at the right hand of the Almighty Potentate, that all power is imparted to him for the governance and preservation of his Church, *at the right hand of the Majesty on high*, and *at the right hand of the throne of God*, (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews), that is, so at the right hand of the Sovereign King of the world, that Royal dignity is communicated to him, in regard to which all honour and worship, all service and obedience are due to him from all creatures.

Thus much plainly the whole speech, *sitting at God's right hand*, doth import; the which matter is otherwise more generally and simply expressed by being at God's right hand, *Who*, saith S. Peter, *is gone into Heaven, and is at the right hand of God, Angels and Authorities and Powers being made subject to him*; and, *It is Christ*, saith S. Paul, *that dyed, yea rather that is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God*. Sometimes also our Lord is represented standing at God's right hand, as in the Revelation several times, and in the vision of S. Stephen, who saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; the which posture doth then seem purposely assigned to him, when he is represented assisting his Servants, or in readiness to achieve some great Work for the good of his Church; but most commonly, as in our Text, it is called *sitting*; the which word in ordinary use denoteth an abode, or permanency in any state: but there is perhaps some peculiar *emphasis* designed in attributing to our Lord that position; it implying the solid ground, the firm possession, the durable continuance, the undisturbed rest and quiet of that glorious condition, wherein he is enstated: the term sitting may also seem to augment the main sense, for that *sitting* is the most honourable posture, and therefore implieth to the utmost that eminency of favour

Sedere judicantis est, stare pugnantis; Stephanus ergo in labore certaminis positus stantem vidit, quem adjuvorem habuit; sed hunc post ascensionem Marcus sedere scribit, quia post ascensionis suae gloriam Judex in fine videbitur. Leo M.

and regard, which our Lord enjoyeth in God's sight. It may farther also denote the nature, quality and design of our Lord's preferment; his being constituted our Ruler and our Judge; *sitting* being a posture most proper and peculiar to such persons; whence this expression representeth him as seated upon a throne of Majesty, or upon a tribunal of Justice.

I shall only farther observe, that the attainment, and settlement of our Lord in this high state, is by one word frequently in Scripture called his glorification. John 7. 39. *The Spirit* (it is said) *was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified*; and when 12. 16. *Jesus was glorified, then they remembred that these things were written of him*; and, 23. 13, 32. *The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified*; and, *Now Father, prayeth our Saviour, glorify me with thee, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*; that is, constitute me as Mediator in glory supereminent above all Creatures, accordingly as in my divine nature I was eternally with thee most gloriously happy. And, *The God of your fathers*, saith S. Peter to the Jews, *hath glorified his child Jesus, whom ye delivered up*; and, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. So much for explication of these points.

II. The confirmation of them may be drawn partly from *ocular testimony*, partly from *rational deduction*, partly from *their correspondence to ancient presignifications, and predictions*.

The ascension of our Lord toward Heaven was testified by the Apostles, who were eye-witnesses thereof; for *παραινέσαντες αὐτόν, they beholding, he was* (saith S. Luke) Acts 1. 9. *taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight*.

His arriving at the supreme pitch of glory, and sitting there, is deduced from Luke 22. 69. the authority of his own word, and of his inspired Disciples, the which standeth Matt. 26. 64. upon the same grounds with other points of Christian faith and doctrine, the which it is not seasonable now to insist upon.

But it may be proper and useful to consider how they (as all other important events, and performances belonging to our Saviour) were by the Holy Spirit in the ancient Prophets, many ways presignified and predicted; that they were so, Luke 24. 25, our Lord telleth us; *Ought not Christ, said he, according to what the Prophets had spoken, to suffer, and so to enter into his glory*? And S. Peter assureth us, that, 1 Pet. 1. 11. *The spirit of Christ which was in the Prophets, did testify before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories after the same*: So indeed there were many signal types repre-

representing them, and many notable passages respecting them, interpreted according to analogy, with other mystical representations.

Isaac, the Heir of promise, after his being devoted for sacrifice, and received from Death in a parable, was settled in a prosperous state of life, God being with him, and blessing him in all things. *Joseph* being freed from that death, to which by his envious Brethren he was designed, and raised from that burial in prison, into which by the Egyptian Gentiles he was cast, was advanced thence unto flourishing dignity, and established in chief authority over the King's house, and over all the land; which persons, as they were in other things, so may they well be conceived in these respects to have been Types of our Lord's Ascension and Glorification. *Joshua* (who in name and performances was the most exact Type of our Lord) being preserved from the common fate of the people, and with miraculous victory over all the accursed enemies of God's people, entering as Captain of Israel into the possession of the promised Land, the sure Type of Heaven, doth fitly represent the glorious ascension of our Lord into Heaven, and his everlasting possession thereof, together with the good people which follow his conduct. The great afflictions and depressions of *David*, with his restoration from them unto a mighty height of royal splendour and prosperity (all enemies foreign and domestic being subdued) may be also supposed to typify the same; his expressions in acknowledgment and thanksgiving for them seeming to allude hither, and to be more congruously applicable to our Lord, than to himself; such for instance as those are in the 21st Psalm: *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever; his glory is great in thy salvation, Honour and Majesty hast thou laid upon him; for thou hast made him most blessed for ever, thou hast made him exceedingly glad with thy countenance, &c.* *Enoch* having walked with God (that is, in constant devotion, and in faithful obedience to God's will) and having received testimony that he pleased God, was taken unto God, thereby prefiguring the ascension of the Well-beloved, in whom God was most well-pleased: So was also the translation of *Elias* into Heaven in the presence of *Elisha*, and other his Disciples, after he most zealously had served God in declaration of his Will, and maintenance of his Truth, a manifest prelude of our Lord's like translation, after he had been employed in the like service, though far more high and important, and performed it in a more eminent manner.

The High Priest was a certain Type of our Lord, and the Jewish Temple a shadow of Heaven, and the Holy of Holies a figure of the highest place in Heaven; wherefore the High Priest's sole and solemn entry once only in the year into the most holy place, after having by a bloody Sacrifice made atonement for all the transgressions of the children of Israel, and his there sprinkling the blood of the Sacrifice upon the Mercy seat, and before the Mercy-seat (the emblem of God's special presence) doth certainly prefigure our Lord's ascending into Heaven, and sitting there at God's right hand; there, by representation of his merits and passion performing the office of a most holy Priest, and gracious Mediator for us: By his own blood (saith the divine Apostle) he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. He is entered, not into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Thus were these points aptly signified; they were also predicted: for *David* in the 68th Psalm, celebrating the glorious triumphs of God over the enemies of his people, and in consequence upon them his solemn entrance and seating himself in *Sion*, the Hill which he delighteth to dwell in (the usual emblem of Heaven) subjoineth; *Thou hast ascended on high* (למרום, to the high place of Heaven) *thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them;* which words appositely suite to our Lord's triumphant ascension, after having subdued all the enemies of his Church, and upon which he liberally dispensed wonderful gifts and graces to his people, and are by the unerring interpretation of *S. Paul* applied thereto.

The ascension of our Lord seemeth also (at least according to mystical exposition reasonably grounded) to be respected in the 24th Psalm, as generally throughout, so particularly in those words, *Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in;* where according to the first, and more literal sense, the entrance of the Ark (the symbol of our Lord himself,

Col. 2. 9. himself, in whom God is most specially present, *in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily*) into the Temple is described; but in a second more elevate, more proper, and more full meaning the entrance of our Lord (the true *Shechinah*) into Heaven seemeth denoted; the doors of that Temple not made with hands, into which he, *the Lord of Glory*, at his ascension did enter, being indeed most truly *the everlasting doors*; and the doors of the earthly Temple being only such as typified them.

Again, The session of our Lord at God's right hand is expressly foretold by Psal. 110. 1. *David; The Lord (saith he) said unto my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool*: Who but the *Messias* could be that Lord of *David*, unto whom God spake? Who but he could be an eternal Priest after the order of *Melchisedec*? Not only therefore our Lord himself expoundeth that place of the *Messias*, but the ancient *Jews* did commonly understand it to concern him; as appeareth by their tacit consent, and forbearing to contradict our Lord so interpreting it.

In fine, all the Prophecies, which are very many, that concern the spiritual and eternal Kingdom of the *Messias* (his being invested with, and exercising regal dignity and power over God's people for ever) do in effect declare the ascension and session of our Lord; particularly those of *David*; *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion*; and, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*; *the sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre*: and that of *Daniel*; *I saw, in the night visions, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the antient of days, and they brought him near before him*; and there was given him dominion and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. So were these points foreshewed and foretold, to the manifestation of God's wisdom, and the confirmation of our faith.

III. Now for the ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and his abode in Heaven at God's right hand (I join them together as coincident or subordinate) they are in the Scripture declared to be chiefly these.

In general, our Lord by them was invested in the compleat exercise of all the offices, and in the full enjoyment of all the privileges belonging to him as perfect Mediator, Sovereign King, High Priest, and Arch-Prophet of God's Church and People: He did initially, and in part exercise those functions upon earth; and a ground of enjoying those preeminences he laid here, but the entire execution and possession of all, by his ascension into Heaven, and in his session there, he did obtain particularly.

I. Our Lord did ascend unto, and doth reside in Heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty and Power, that as a King he might govern us, protecting us from all danger, relieving us in all want, delivering us from all evil; that he might subdue and destroy all the enemies of his Kingdom and our salvation; the Devil with all his retinue, the World, the Flesh, Sin, Death and Hell; whatever doth oppose his glory, his truth, his service, whatever consequently by open violence or fraudulent practice doth hinder our salvation: *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool*; so God by the Holy Spirit in *David* did speak unto him; whence *S. Peter* doth thus infer: *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ*; that is, his being seated in that place of special eminency is an infallible argument of his Royal Majesty and Sovereignty; and, *This Man (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his Enemies be made his footstool*; and accordingly, *He must (as S. Paul saith) reign, until he hath put all his enemies under his feet*. By various combats in his life our Lord did worst and weaken his and our enemies; and in the last great battle on his Cross, he did thoroughly rout and overthrow them; but by his triumphant ascension into Heaven he led captivity captive, enjoying the glory and benefit of his victory; by sitting at God's right hand he keepeth them down in irrecoverable subjection under his feet, so that none of them can make any successful insurrection against him: for no power certainly shall ever be able to withstand his will and command, who sitteth at the helm of Sovereignty immense, and omnipotent; at that right hand, which can do any thing, which wieldeth and moderateth all things every where; no fraud can

can elude, no secret Conspiracy can escape his knowledg, who sitting in that heavenly Watch-tower of infinite Wisdom and Omniscience, beholdeth whatever is done, said, or thought in all the World.

He so there with Royal Might protecteth us, and with Royal Goodness, Munificence and Clemency he doth also thence dispense grace and mercy to his faithful Subjects; for all good Gifts and Graces bestowed on the Church in general for common edification, and to each member thereof singly for its particular benefit, which are useful for *perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of Christ's Body* in Truth, Holiness, Order and Peace, are expressed to proceed from our Lord's Ascension: *To every one of you (saith S. Paul) is given Grace according to the measure of the Gift of Christ;* that is, to every one of you proportionably according to the quality of your employment, rank, or station in the Church, and according to the particular exigency of your needs, as Christ in wisdom seeth fit, Grace is afforded, in correspondence (addeth he) to the *Psal-mist's* Prophecy concerning our Saviour; *Having ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

Particularly in virtue, or consequence of his Ascension and Glorification, to all true penitents and converts unto God, mercy and pardon for their sins are dispensed: that repentance should be acceptable to God, and available for attainment of Mercy, our Lord did indeed merit for us by his suffering; but he effectually dispenseth it in God's name, being now enstated in glory, as a noble Boon of his royal Clemency: *God, saith S. Peter, exalted him as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.*

2. Our Saviour did ascend, and now sitteth at God's right hand, that he may, in regard to us, there exercise his Priestly function. Having in this outward tabernacle once offered up himself a pure and perfect Sacrifice for the expiation of our sins, he entered within the veil, into the most Holy Place, there presenting his blood before God himself, to the full effect of obtaining mercy for us, and restoring us to God's favour: *He is (saith the Apostle) entred into heaven it self, there to appear in the presence of God for us;* so that whenever we by our frailty do fall into sin, and do heartily by repentance turn unto God, invoking his mercy, our Lord is ready by applying the virtue of his sacrifice, and pleading our cause with God, upon the terms of that gracious Covenant purchased and ratified by his blood, to procure mercy for us: for, *If any man sin, we have (saith S. John) an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is a propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world:* And, who (saith S. Paul) *is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;* that is, seeing our Lord hath offered a well-pleasing sacrifice for our sins, and doth at God's right hand continually renew it, by presenting it unto God, and interceding with him for the effect thereof; What, supposing us qualified for mercy, can hinder us from obtaining it?

Our Lord also doth at God's right hand discharge the Princely ministry of praying for us, and so interceding in our behalf, as thereby to acquire from God to be conferred on us whatever is needful, or conducive to our salvation: *He (saith the Apostle) is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.* More particularly he, by his mediation there, doth procure for us a free access to God in devotion, a favourable reception of our petitions and services, a good success of them in the supply of all our needs; for, *Through him we have access by the Spirit unto the Father, and, Having a great High-Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God — let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in the time of need,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. And He, as he is represented in the Apocalypse, is that Angel of the Covenant, who at the golden Altar before God doth offer up the prayers of the Saints, incensed by his mediation and merits.

Hence in his name, and through him it is, that we are enjoined to present our Prayers, our Thanksgivings, and all our Services; ** doing all whatever we do in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

3. Again, Our Lord telleth us, that it was necessary he should depart hence, and enter into this glorious state, that he might there exercise his Prophetical office, by imparting to us his holy Spirit for our instruction, direction, assistance and comfort, * Col. 3. 17.

- Luke 24. 49. comfort. *Behold* (said he upon his departure) *I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with the power from on high*; this he promised then to his disciples, but did not perform until his exaltation: *Being therefore* (saith S. Peter) *exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear*. He did not, and indeed (in consistence with the divine purpose, and the designed œconomy of things) could not perform this until then; *It is* (said he) *expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him to you*; that is, God, for promoting our Saviour's honour, and for the glory of his undertaking, had in his wisdom determined, that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the reward of his obedience, the consequence of his triumph, the effect of his intercession above, an ornament of his Royal state, a pledge of his Princely munificence: It was reserved as a most rich and majestick gratuity, fit to be conferred at his coronation, then when he solemnly was inaugurated to sovereign Dignity, and invested with power superlative: whence, *The Holy Spirit* ('tis said in S. John) *was not yet* (that is, it was not yet poured forth, or bestowed in that conspicuous manner, and copious measure, as God intended it should be afterwards) *because Jesus was not yet glorified*: It was from Jesus being received into glory, and advanced to God's right hand, that so transcendent a boon was in God's purpose, and according to his promise designed to come down.
- John 14. 2. 4. Again, Our Lord himself telleth us, that he went to Heaven, there to prepare a place for his faithful servants, to prepare mansions of joy and bliss in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore.
- Psal. 16. 11. He accordingly hath (as the Apostle saith) entred as our ἀποστολος, our fore-runner into heaven; as an honourable Harbinger having disposed things there for our reception and entertainment; or rather as the son and heir of that great house, he by his authority and interest there procured leave for us to enter, and reside there,
- John 17. 24. or carrieth us as his retinue thither; *It is my will* (saith he) *that where I am, there*
14. 3. 12. 26. *should ye be also, that ye may contemplate my glory*, and consequently may partake thereof. It was indeed our Lord's ascension, which did unlock the gates of heaven, before shut upon us by our sins, which quenched the flaming sword, and discharged the mighty Cherubin, which guarded Paradise from all access to men.
- Flammea illa rhombæa, custos paradisi, &c. presidentia foribus Cherubim Christi: estincta, &c. reserata sunt sanguine. Hier. Ep. 3.
- Ὁυρανὸς ἐν τῷ ἀκατοῦ. Chrys. ad Heb. 9. 8.
- Ante Christum Abraham apud inferos, post Christum latro in paradiso, &c. Hier. in Epitaph. Nepot. Ep. 3.
- John 3. 13. Lord in S. John, *No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, who is in heaven*; and the forecited place, *I go to prepare a place for you*; which seemeth to imply heaven before unfit to receive men; and those places, wherein our Lord affirmeth himself to be the gate of the sheep; and, the way to the Father; and that of the Apostle to the Hebrews, concerning the Patriarchs, and other good men before Christ's Incarnation; *And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfect*. Hither also they referred that of the Psalmist, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in*; which words they interpreted to signify the gates of Heaven then to have been first opened, when our Lord did ascend thither. Joshua (a most congruous type of our Lord) leading God's people into the land of promise, did also to their sense imply our Lord's first entring into Heaven. The High Priest alone entring into the Sanctuary, did, as they deemed, argue the same; the Apostle to the Hebrews seeming much to favour their sentiment, when he saith, *Into the second* (Tabernacle) *went the High Priest alone once every year not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, whilst the first tabernacle was yet standing*. The same also was (say they) signified by those persons, who for offences wide of man-lice, were detained in the cities of refuge, and prohibited to return home until the
- Numb. 35. 28. the

the death of the High Priest, but were afterward restored to the land of their possession; thereby, say they, being intimated, that until after our Saviour's death, no man could return into Paradise, his primitive home, from which man for his sin had been excluded; but that henceforth all persons, in an Evangelical account, not malicious or wicked, had a right and liberty to return thither. Upon these and the like

grounds did the *Fathers* commonly suppose no person before our Lord's ascension to have entred heaven; but however it were as to the time, yet assuredly in order of nature and causality it was he that did first ascend thither, and by virtue of his ascension it is, that any man ever did, or shall ever come thither: *His blood was* (as S. Hierom saith) *the key of Paradise*, the efficacy of which he carrying up with him did unlock it, so that thenceforth it doth stand wide open to those who can

fore up thither, following his steps in persevering obedience: *Having therefore* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart* — and, *He being* (perfected, or consummated in his state of glory) *became to all that obey him the Author of everlasting salvation; being denominated by God a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.*

5. It was indeed an effect of our Lord's ascension and glorification, that all good Christians are with him in a sort translated into heaven, and advanced into a glorious state; being thence by him *made Kings and Priests to God.* *We have* (saith Tertullian) *in Christ Jesus seized on heaven; and the Apostle saith as much: Us* (saith he) *who were dead in trespasses and sins, God hath quickned together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* In many respects we thereby are raised to heaven and eminent glory.

We thence even as men become greatly dignified, our nature being so highly advanced thereby: we thereby get the honour of being brethren or kinsmen to the world's great Lord and King; so that any of us may say with S. *Antonin*, *Where my flesh reigns, there I believe my self to reign*: hence, as the Apostle to the Hebrews teacheth us, is that of the Psalmist verified concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands.*

We also more as Christians are elevated thereby by our near relation to him, and our participation with him as our head: for where the head is, there the body is; they are inseparably connected, there can be no breach, no distance between them; and the honour confer'd on the head, doth necessarily accrue to the members; according to S. Paul's rule; *If one member be glorified, all the members do rejoice with it, or do partake of its joyful state.* *Christi ascensio nostra est proventus*, *The ascension of Christ is our preferment; and whether the Glory of the head is gone before, thither likewise is the hope of the body called, saith a devout Father.*

We also are by our Lord's glorification advanced and advantaged, in that his being so glorified is a sure pledg and an earnest of that glorious reward, which all good Christians shall receive. *Christ being made heir of all things*, did in his ascension, *adire hereditatem*, take possession of that inheritance, and we consequently as co-heirs with him; and *having a share in the inheritance of the Saints in light*, do sieze thereon, acquiring therein a right and propriety at present, being assured in due time (if by our miscarriages we do not forfeit our title) of an actual possession thereof: *As* (saith Tertullian) *Christ did leave to us the earnest of the Spirit, so he received from us the earnest of the flesh, and carried it into heaven as a pledg of the whole sum to be sometime brought in thither.*

We do also in a manner ascend with Christ to heaven, in regard that by his ascension our principal concerns, our only considerable interests (that *are* *better and enduring substance*) the true objects of our affection, and all our hope are transferred thither; whence heaven becometh our only true country,

Quid est quod homicida post mortem Pontificis absolutus ad terram propriam redit? nisi quod humanum genus, quod peccando sibi mortem intulit, post mortem veri sacerdotis, id est Christi, peccatorum vinculis solvitur, & in paradisi possessionem reparatur. Greg. M. Hom. in Ezech.

Sanguis Christi est clavis paradisi. Hier. Ep. 129.

Heb. 10. 19.

Heb. 5. 9.

Apo. 1. 6.

Ubi caro mea regnat, ibi me regnare credo. Aug. Med.

Psal. 8. 5.

Heb. 2. 7.

Christi ascensio nostra est proventus; & quo processit gloria capitis, eo spes vocatur & corporis. Leo P.

Heb. 1. 2.

Rom. 8. 17.

Eph. 1. 11.

Col. 1. 12.

Quemadmodum Christus nobis arrhabonem Spiritus reliquit, ita & a nobis arrhabonem carnis accepit, & vixit in calum pignus totius summa illuc quandoque redigenda. Tertull. de Resurr. c. 51.

Heb. 10. 34.

Heb. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 1. 17.
2 Cor. 5. 6.

Phil. 3. 20. Eph. 2. 19. Heb. 12.
22.

Προσηλυτισμὸν.

Colof. 1. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 1, 2.
Colof. 1. 5. Gal. 6. 14. 2. 20.
Col. 3. 3.

our life is hid with Christ in God : and where we are so concerned, there especially in spirit and heart we may be supposed to be.

6. I might add, that God did thus advance our Saviour to declare the special regard he beareth to piety, righteousness and obedience, by his so amply rewarding, and highly dignifying the practice thereof : *We* (saith the Apostle) *see Jesus for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour* : We see him, not only as an object of our contemplation, but as a pattern of our practice, and as a ground of our encouragement ; *Looking up* (saith that Apostle again) *unto Jesus the captain and the perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God* : God it seemeth did intend, and he doth propound our Lord's exaltation for an engagement and motive to us of following him in the way by which he attained it ; giving us assuredly to hope for the like rewards of glory and joy, in proportion answerable to our imitation of his exemplary obedience and patience.

Such are the principal ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and session at God's right hand ; the consideration of which points may have great use, and should have much influence upon our practice.

1. It may serve to guard us from divers errors, which to the dangerous prejudice and disparagement of our Religion (introducing into it notions thwarting reason and sense, charging it with needless and groundless incredibilities, exposing it to difficulties and objections so massy, that the foundations of Christian truth are scarce able to support them) have been, and are asserted by divers persons, or by sects of men professing Christianity, such as are that of the old *Encycians*, who held that the humane nature of our Lord was converted into his Divinity, or swallowed up thereby ; that of the *German Ubiquitaries*, who say, that our Lord according to his humane nature corporally doth exist every where ; that of the *Lutheran Consubstantialists*, and of the *Roman Transubstantiators*, who affirm, that the body of our Lord is here upon earth at once present in many places (namely in every place where the *Host* is kept, or the *Eucharist* is celebrated) which assertions by the right understanding of these points will appear to be false. For our Lord did visibly in humane shape ascend to Heaven (which to do is inconsistent with the invisible, omnipresent and immoveable nature of God) and therefore he continueth still a man ; and as such he abideth in heaven, and therefore he doth not exist every where, or other-where. It is the property of a Creature to have a definite existence, or to be only in one place at one time ; for could it be in divers places at once, it might by like reason be in any, or in every place, and consequently it might be immense ; nor can we conceive a thing to be at once in several distant places, without its being multiplied in essence ; it especially is repugnant to the nature of a body at once to possess several places, seeing its substance and quantity do not really differ, or are inseparably combined, whence it cannot be multiplied in dimensions, answerable to many localities, without being multiplied in substance ; wherefore since our Lord as man did by a proper local motion ascend, pass through, and enter into the heavens (being, as it is said in *Holy Scripture*, in the visible form and dimensions of his body, taken, carried, lifted up, gone into heaven, parting from his Disciples, going away from us, leaving the world and going to the Father ; being where no man here can come, or can follow him, being to be no more in the world, so that we have him not always with us ; being there, where we being in the Body, are absent from him ; seeing he doth now reside in heaven, which must (as *S. Peter* affirmed) receive (or hold) him, until the restitution of all things :

Heb. 9. 24.
4. 14.
Acts 1. 2, 9,
10, 11.
Luke 24. 50,
51.

Mark 16. 19.
Matth. 26. 11. 1 Pet. 3. 22.
John 16. 5, 7. 14. 28. 13. 3.
7. 33, 34. 8. 21. 13. 36. 17. 11.
2 Cor. 5. 6.
Or see *ἡ ἀνάστασις*. Acts 3. 21.

things : where he constantly appeareth in God's presence for us, and ever liveth to make intercession for us ; whence also we do expect that in the like visible manner as he went, that he shall come again, descending (as S. Paul speaketh) from heaven, and coming in the clouds of heaven, at the last resurrection and judgment, which is therefore commonly termed his presence, and appearance here). Since, I say, according to

the tenour of Scripture, our Lord did thus as man in his flesh go into heaven, and there perpetually doth abide in glory, until he shall thence return hither to

judge the world, we must not suppose him to be any where corporally upon earth : He is indeed every where by his divinity present with us ; he is also in his humanity present to our faith, to our memory, to our affection, he is therein also present by mysterious representation, by spiritual efficacy, by general inspection, and influence upon his Church ;

but in body, as we are absent from him, so is he likewise separated from us ; we must depart hence, that we may be with him, in the place whither he is gone to prepare for us : Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down thence ? saith S. Paul,

intimating where he doth immoveably abide, in exclusion to all other places. These things (beside many other strong reasons) if we do consider, it will suffice to guard us from those rampant absurdities, which so long with such impudence, and such violence have outraved plain reason and sense : But to leave this, and to come to more practical applications.

2. Is Christ ascended, and advanced to this glorious eminency at God's right hand ? then let us answerably behave our selves toward him, rendring him the honour and worship, the fear and reverence, the service and obedience suitable, and due to that his state. In regard hereto all the *Angels of God* are commanded

to adore him, and they willingly submit thereto, acknowledging him to deserve the highest worship ; Every creature (tis in the Revelation) in heaven, in earth,

and under the earth, doth in its way send up acclamations of blessing and praise unto him : And shall we then refuse, or neglect to do the like ? we who of all

creatures in equity and gratitude are most obliged, who in reason and interest are most concerned to honour him, as our selves receiving most honour and advantage from his exaltation ? Shall we be backward, in yielding obedience to him,

who is in nature so nearly related to us, and in affection so well disposed toward us ; who out of tender good-will toward us, hath undertaken this high charge, and exerciseth it with design to do us good ; who therefore especially is pleased

to sit at the helm, that he may protect us from all the enemies of our welfare, and that he may settle us in the enjoyment of happiness ? Shall we dare to oppose his will, and not dread to displease him, to whom all power in heaven and

earth is given ; whose will is executed by the irresistible right hand of God ; who therefore can easily check us in our bad courses, and will surely chastise us for our disobedience. We do plainly hereby incur the heinous guilt, and shall surely undergo the grievous punishment of rebellion ; this being the sentence, which refusing subjection to him, we shall one day hear, and feel ; Those mine enemies,

that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.

3. These points do afford ground and matter of great joy and comfort to us : Have we not cause to rejoyce, that our Lord hath obtained so absolute and glorious a victory over all our cruel enemies ? Should we not with joyful gratulation applaud the triumphs of goodness over wickedness, of charity over malice, of

mercy over wrath, of life and happiness over death and misery ? Is it not matter of huge satisfaction, that one of our kind and kindred, who beareth toward us the bowels of a man, and the affection of a brother, who hath yielded so wonderful expressions of good-will and charity toward us, who so loved us, as to lay down his life for us, is raised to such preferment ? Shall we not be pleased, that we have so good a friend in so high place, and so great power ; or that he who is so willing, is also so able to do us good ? Have we not great cause to acquiesce in our subjection to so just, so mild, so gracious a Governour ; the sceptre of whose Kingdom is a right sceptre, whose yoke is easy, and burden light ? Shall we not be glad, considering, that we have so merciful, and so kind an intercessor

Heb. 7. 25. 9. 24.

Acts 1. 11. 1 Thess. 4. 16. 1. 10.

2 Thess. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 47.

Phil. 1. 20. Apoc. 1. 7.

Matth. 24. 30.

(Eis dñmwn xwls. 1 Thess. 4. 17.)

Παρουσία. Ἐμπόρευμα.

Secundum majestatem suam, secundum providentiam, secundum ineffabilem & invisibilem gratiam impletur quod ab eo dictum est, Ecce ego vobiscum — secundum carnem vero — non semper habebitis me vobiscum. Aug. in Joh. Tract. 50.

2 Cor. 5. 6.

Phil. 1. 23.

1 Thess. 4. 17.

Rom. 10. 6.

Heb. 1. 6.

Apoc. 5. 12,

13.

Matt. 28. 18.

Luke 19. 27.

always resident with God, always ready to do good offices for us at the throne of Grace? Considering this, what is there that can be, or happen in the world, that should displease, discourage, or disturb us? What enemies should we fear, since all our enemies lie prostrate under his feet? What good can we fear to want, since all things are at his disposal, and all good is dispensed by him? What events should trouble us, since all things are managed and ordered by his good hand? Will he suffer any thing to hurt us? Will he see us need any convenience? Will he let us be oppressed by any mischief or distress, whose office it is, and continual care to protect and succour us? Have we not, in contemplation of these things, abundant reason to comply with that precept, of *rejoicing in the Lord always*? Be our case in this world what it will, considering where our Lord is, we have great cause to be cheerful, according to that injunction of our Lord, enforced by this consideration: *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

Phil. 4. 4.
3. 1.

John 16. 33.

4. The consideration of these things serveth to cherish and strengthen all kind of faith and hope in us. If the resurrection of our Saviour might beget in us a strong persuasion concerning the truth of our Lord's doctrine, and a *lively hope* of salvation from his undertakings and performances for us, his ascension and session in glory (confirmed by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities) must needs nourish, improve and corroborate them. We cannot surely distrust the accomplishment of any promises declared by him, we cannot despair of receiving any good from him, who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of divine wisdom and divine power, thence viewing all things done here, thence ordering all things every where for the advantage of those who love him and trust in him.

Tit. 2. 13.

Heb. 6. 19.

It especially doth serve to quicken in us that *blessed hope*, as S. Paul calleth it, of a joyful and happy rest after the troubles and sorrows of this wretched life; *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the veil, where the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

Heb. 4. 16.

Mat. 21. 22.

7. 8.

Mark 11. 24.

1 John 5. 14.

John 14. 13.

15. 7. 16. 23.

5. These points do likewise serve to excite and encourage our devotion; for having such a Mediator in heaven, so near God's presence, so much in God's favour, having so good and sure a friend at court, having such a *master of requests* ever ready to present up, to recommend and to further our petitions, what should deter, what should any-wise withhold us from cheerfully, upon all occasions, by him addressing our selves to God? We may therefore, as we are exhorted by the *Apostle, come to the throne of grace with boldness, that we may receive mercy, and find grace for seasonable aid.* We cannot, considering this, any-wise doubt of those promises being effectually made good to us: *Whatever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive: Whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do:* There is nothing, which he enjoying such power cannot do for us; and there is nothing which he our loving and merciful brother will not do that is good for us, if we do with humble confidence apply our selves to him for it: And what greater incitement can there be to devotion, than an assurance so firmly grounded of fair acceptance and happy success thereof? yea, what an extreme folly, what a huge crime is it not to make use of such an advantage, not by so obliging an inducement to be moved to a constant practice of this so beneficial, and sweet kind of duties?

Luke 22. 29.

Apoc. 1. 6.

5. 10.

6. It may encourage us to all kind of obedience, to consider what a high pitch of eternal glory and dignity our Lord hath obtained, in regard to his obedience, and as a pledge of like recompence designed to us, if we tread in his footsteps, *running the race that is set before us, and looking up to Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God.* As God in respect to what he should perform, did offer to him so high a promotion, so doth he likewise upon condition of our obedience to his commandments, oblige himself to put us into a like excellent and happy state; so our Lord himself declared, when he said, *I covenant to you a Kingdom, as my Father covenanted to me a Kingdom:* it goeth before, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations,* there is the condition, faithful and constant adherence to Christ in doing and suffering, upon performance of which condition our Lord tendereth that glorious reward of an eternal Kingdom: And the divine covenant being

being thus effectually fulfilled unto him, doth ascertain us, that his overture will likewise be made good to us : *It is*, saith S. Paul, a faithful saying, (that is, 2 Tim. 2. 11. word upon which we may confidently rely) *if we be dead with him* (dead to sin ^{12.} and vanity) *we shall also live with him* (live with him in glory and joy) *if we endure* (or persevere in obedience and patience after him) *we shall also reign with him*. And, *To him* (saith our Lord in the Revelation) *that overcometh, will I* Apoc. 3. 21. *grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.*

7. Lastly, The consideration of these points should elevate our thoughts and affections from these inferiour things here (the vain and base things of this world) unto heavenly things ; according to that of S. Paul ; *If ye be risen with Christ*, Col. 3. 1. *seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.* To the head of our body we should be joyn'd, continually deriving sense and motion, direction and activity from him : where the master of our family is, there should our minds be, constantly attentive to his pleasure, and ready to serve him ; where the city is, whose denizens we are, and where our final rest must be, there should our thoughts be, careful to observe the laws and orders, that we may enjoy the Heb. 11. 16. immunities and privileges thereof : In that country, where only we have any good estate, or valuable concernment, there our mind should be studying to secure and improve our interest therein : our resolution should be conformable to that of the Holy Psalmist, *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help.* *Christ is our life*, saith S. Paul ; And shall our souls be parted from our Col. 3. 4. life ? *Christ* (saith he again) *is our hope* ; And shall our mind and hope be asunder ? Gal. 2. 20. *Christ* is the principal object of our love, of our trust, of our joy, of all our best 1 Tim. 1. 1. affections ; And shall our affections be severed from their best objects ? By his Col. 1. 27. being in heaven all our treasure becometh there ; *and where our treasure is, there* Animus est, ubi amat. *(if we apprehend and believe rightly, there naturally) our hearts will be also* : if they be not, 'tis a sign we take him not for our best treasure. *We do in our bodies sojourn from the Lord*, as S. Paul saith ; but in our spirits we may, and should be ever present, ever conversant with him ; contemplating him with an eye of faith, fastning our love upon him, reposing our confidence in him, directing our Prayers and Thanksgivings to him ; meditating upon his good Laws, his gracious Promises, his holy Life, and his merciful Performances for us. We should not, by fixing our hearts and desires upon earthly things (upon the vain delights, the sordid interests, the fallacious and empty glories, the sinful enjoyments here) nor by a dull and careless neglect of heavenly things, avert, estrange, or separate our selves wholly from him. No, *sursum corda*, let us, unloosing our hearts from these things, and with them soaring upward, follow and adhere to our Lord ; so shall we anticipate that blessed future State, so shall we assure to our selves the possession of heaven ; so here enjoying our Lord in affection, we shall hereafter obtain a perfect fruition of his glorious and blissful presence ; the which God of his mercy by his grace vouchsafe us, through the same our ever blessed Saviour, to whom be for ever all glory and praise. *Amen.*

O God the King of Glory, who hast exalted thine own Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy Kingdom in Heaven ; we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us to the same place, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before ; who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, one God world without end. Amen.

From thence He shall come to judg
the quick and the dead.

S E R M O N XXXII.

The Reasonableness and Equity of a Future Judgment.

ECCLES. III. 17.

I said in my heart, God shall judg the righteous and the wicked.



Eccl. I. 13.

THESE words are the result of a serious contemplation upon the state of human affairs, and common occurrences in this world: the Royal Philosopher having (as he telleth us) given his heart to seek, and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that were done under heaven; what was the proper nature, what the just price of each thing; what real benefit or solid comfort each did afford; how every person did fare in the pursuit, and success of his designs; did, after full examination, and careful balancing all things, resolve upon such conclusions as these,

1. 8. 2. 11.

That no kind of undertaking here did in effect yield any considerable profit, or compleat satisfaction, but all in the issue did prove vain and vexatious.

2. 11. 9. 11.
11. 6.

That no man from his care and industry, in any course of life, could promise himself any certain success, or reap answerable reward.

2. 13.

That although between wisdom and folly (or between goodness and wickedness) there is some intrinsic difference of worth (*one excelling the other, as light doth excell darknes*) yet as to external advantages, and as to final event here,

2. 15. 7. 15.
9. 1. 11.

there is no great odds discernable; for that events (prosperous and adverse) did appear to fall out, not according to the qualifications, or to the practices of men, but indifferently, according to the swinge of *time and chance*, and for that death

2. 16. 3. 19.

and oblivion alike do seize upon all, so that apparently in that respect, *a man hath no preeminence over a beast.*

2. 24. 3. 12.
5. 18. 8. 15.
11. 10.

That in common life nothing doth appear better, than for a man with the best advantage he can, to enjoy ordinary sensible delights and comforts, which his condition doth afford.

4. 2. 3.
2. 17. 18.

That in regard to the present things here, life were not desirable to any man, the inconveniences and troubles thereof outweighing its benefits; so that even the wisest, greatest and happiest persons (such as he himself was) had cause to *bate life, and all their labour which they had taken under the sun.*

3. 11. 8. 17.
11. 5.

That the mind and affection of God toward men are very reserved; the course of providence very abstruse, the reason of events unsearchable to the wit or study of men; so that we can hardly from appearances here descry any conspicuous marks of God's favour, or his displeasure.

11. 9. 12. 14.
5. 8. 8. 12.
7. 18.

From these observations, as from so many arguments, he doth both here and elsewhere in several places of this Book infer, that there shall be a divine judgment, passing upon all men, both righteous and wicked; whereby these seeming incongruities in the providential administration of things shall be salved; and in re-

regard whereto our present opinions of things may be rectified: this he interposeth here, *I said in my heart* (that is, by the consideration of things I was persuaded) *that God shall judg the righteous and the wicked*; this he ever now and then toucheth as incident to his meditations; this he in the close of all proposeth as the grand inducement to piety, and obedience to God's commandments: *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Eccles. 2. 14.

This judgment he expresseth indefinitely, so as not to determine the kind or time thereof; and as to the absolute force of his words, it may signifie the decree of God, to reward or punish men here in this life according to their deserts, the which in holy Scripture is commonly stiled God's judgment: but the force of his arguments (or at least of some of them) plainly doth infer a future judgment after death; and so therefore I shall take his sense to be, grounding thereon this *observation*, That from a wise consideration of humane affairs, and obvious events here, we may collect the reasonableness, the equity, the expediency, the moral or prudential necessity of a future judgment, according to which men shall receive due recompences, answerable to their demeanour in this life. This observation it shall be my endeavour by God's help to declare, and prove by arguments deduced from the reason and nature of things.

First, then I say, it is reasonable and equal that there should be a future judgment; this will appear upon many accounts.

1. Seeing all men come hither without any knowledge or choice, having their life as it were, obtruded on them; and seeing ordinarily (according to the general complaints of men) the pains of this life do over-balance its pleasures; so that it seemeth, in regard to what men find here, a punishment to be born; it seemeth also thence equal, that men should be put into a capacity, upon their good behaviour in this troublesome state, of a better state hereafter, in compensation for what they endure here; otherwise God might seem not to have dealt fairly with his creatures, and we might have some colour to expostulate with *Job*; *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul? Why dyed I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the Ghost, when I came out of the belly?* Job. 3. 20, 11.

Vitam non mehercule quisquam accepisset, nisi daretur inficis. Sen. ad Marc. 22.

Nemini contigit impune nasci. Sen. ad Marc. 15.

Eccles. 4. 3, 4. 2. 17.
Job 3. 3. 15. 10.
Jer. 20. 14. &c.

2. Seeing man is endued with a free choice, and power over his actions, and thence by a good or bad use thereof is capable of deserving well or ill, it is just that a respective difference be made, according to due estimation; and that men answerably should be proceeded with either here or hereafter, reaping the fruits of what they voluntarily did sow. There is a natural relation between merits and rewards, which must come under taxation, and find effect, otherwise there would be no such thing as justice and injustice in the world. Job 4. 8.
Prov. 22. 8.
Jer. 32. 19.

3. Seeing there is a natural subordination of man to God, as of a creature to his Maker, as of a subject or servant to his Lord, as of a client or dependent to his Patron, Protector and Benefactor, whence correspondent obligations do result; it is just that men should be accountable for the performance, and for the violation or neglect of them; so as accordingly either to receive approbation, or to be obliged to render satisfaction; respectively as they have done right, and payed respect to God, or as they have offered to wrong and dishonour him; otherwise those relations would seem vain and idle.

4. Seeing also there are natural relations of men to one another, and frequent transactions between them, founding several duties of humanity and justice; the which may be observed or transgressed; so that some men shall do, and others suffer much injury, without any possible redress from other-where, it is fit that a reference of such cases should be made to the common patron of right, and that by him they should be so decided, that due amends should be made to one party, and fit correction inflicted on the other; according to that of S. Paul; *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest with us in the revelation of our Lord Jesus.* 2 Thes. 1. 6.

5. Whereas also there are many secret good actions, many inward good dispositions, good wishes, and good purposes, unto which here no honour, no profit, no pleasure, no sort of benefit is annexed, or indeed well can be (they being in-

dis-

discernable to men) there are likewise many bad practises, and designs concealed, or disguised, so as necessarily to pass away without any check, any disgrace, any damage or chastisement here: it is most equal that hereafter both these kinds should be disclosed, and obtain answerable recompence.

6. There are also persons, whom, although committing grievous wrong, oppression, and other heinous misdemeanours, offensive to God and man, yet, by reason of the inviolable sacredness of their authority, or because of their uncontrollable power, no justice here can reach, nor punishment can touch; who therefore should be reserved to the impartial, and irresistible judgment of God; and fit it is, that (for satisfaction of justice, and distinction of such from those, who contrariwise behave themselves well) a *Tophet* should be prepared for them.

11a. 30. 33.

7. Upon these and the like accounts equity requireth, that a judgment should pass upon the deeds of men; and thereto the common opinions of men, and the private dictates of each man's conscience do attest: for all men seeing any person to demean himself brutishly and unworthily, committing heinous disorders and outrages, are apt to pronounce it unfit, that such an one should escape with impunity; likewise when innocent and good persons (who do no harm, and do what good they can) do suffer, or do enjoy no benefit thence, it is a pity, will any indifferent person be ready to say, that such a man's case should not be considered; that some reparation, or some reward should not be allotted to him: the which apprehensions of men are in effect the verdicts of common sense concerning the equity of a judgment to be.

8. Every man also having committed any notable misdemeanour (repugnant to piety, justice, or sobriety) doth naturally accuse himself for it, doth in his heart sentence himself to deserve punishment, and doth stand possessed with a dread thereof; so, even unwillingly, avouching the equity of a judgment, and by a forcible instinct presaging it to come. As likewise he that hath performed any virtuous or honest action, doth not only rest satisfied therein, but hath raised in him a strong hope of benefit to come from heaven in recompence thereof: the which apprehensions, and hopes do involve an opinion, that it is reasonable a judgment should be. All which considerations (seeing it is manifest that there is not generally or frequently any such exact judgment, or dispensation of rewards in this life, nor perhaps without changing the whole frame of things, and course of providence, can well be) do therefore infer the fitness, and equity of a future judgment.

It is farther, upon divers accounts, requisite and needful, that men should have an apprehension concerning such a judgment appointed by God, and consequently that such an one should really be. It is requisite toward the good conduct of humane affairs here; or to engage men to the practice of virtue: It is necessary to the maintaining any belief concerning Religion, or sense of piety; without it therefore no convenient Society among men can be well upheld.

1. It is, I say, needful to engage men upon the practice of any virtue, and to restrain them from any vice; for that indeed without it, no consideration of reason, no provision of law here, can be much available to those purposes. He that will consider the nature of men, or observe their common practice (marking what apprehensions usually steer them, what inclinations sway them, in their elections and pursuits of things) shall, I suppose, find, that from an invincible principle of self-love, or sensuality, deriving it self through all their motions of soul, and into all their actions of life, men generally do so strongly propend to the enjoyment of present sensible goods, that nothing but a presumption of some considerable benefit to be obtained by abstinence from them, or of some grievous mischief consequent on the embracing them, can withhold them from pursuing such enjoyment. From hence (seeing fancy, reason and experience do all prompt men to a foresight of events, and force them to some regard of the consequences of things) it followeth, that hope and fear are the main springs, which set on work all the wheels of humane action: so that any matter being propounded, if men can hope, that it will yield pleasant, or profitable (that is, tending to pleasant) fruits, they will undertake it; if they do fear its consequences will be distasteful, or hurtful, they will decline it: very rare it is to find, that the love or liking of a thing, as in it self amiable to the mind, or suitable to reason, doth incline men thereto; that honest things, bare of present advantages, and barren of hopeful fruits,

fruits, are heartily pursued; that any thing otherwise averteth us from it self, than as immediately presenting some mischief, or dangerously threatening it. When goodness therefore doth clash with interest or pleasure, *humane wisdom* Rom. 8. 6. (the *ἐπιμαρτυρία τοῦ σώματος*, *natural sense of the flesh*, which S. Paul speaketh of, as opposite to virtue) will dispose men to take part with these, and except some higher aid come in to succour goodness, 'tis odds, that ever they will prevail over it. If it do appear, that virtue can pay men well for their pains, they perhaps may be her Servants; but they will hardly wait on her in pure courtesie, or work in her service for nothing; if she bringeth visibly a good dowry with her, she may be courted; but her mere beauty, or worth will draw few suitors to her. Who will forgo sensible pleasures, or wave substantial profit? who will reject the overtures of power, or honour, for her sake? And if vice, how ill soever it look or lear, do offer fairly, how many persons will be so nice, or squeamish, as merely out of fancy, or in despatch, to her to refuse or renounce her? In short, as men are bated with pleasure, or bribed with profit, so they pursue; as they are stung with pain, or curbed with fear, so they eschew things: it is a gift (or a specious appearance of some good offered) which perpetually moveth the greatest part, which often *blindeth the eyes, and perverteth the heart* of the wisest Deut. 16. 19. Exod. 23. 8. fort of men.

It is farther to common sense very obvious, that this life cannot promise, or afford to virtue any rewards apparently so considerable, as in the common judgment of men to overpoise the pains and difficulties required to the procurement and maintenance thereof (the pains and difficulties to be overcome in mastering stubborn inclinations, in moderating greedy appetites, in restraining violent passions, in encountering frequent and strong temptations, in abstracting our minds and affections from sensible things, in assiduous watching over our thoughts, words and actions) together with the manifold inconveniences, crosses and troubles, which do attend the strict practice of virtue; that likewise here there are not ordinarily any such discouragements affixed to vice, which do much weigh down the pleasures with which it is tempered, and the advantages waiting on it.

As for human laws, made to encourage and requite virtue, or to check and chastise vice, it is also manifest that they do extend to cases in comparison very few; and that even as to particulars, which they touch, they are so easily eluded, or evaded, that without entrenching upon them, at least without incurring their edg, or coming within the verge of their correction, men may be very bad in themselves, extremely injurious to their neighbours, and hugely troublesome to the world; so that such laws hardly can make tolerable citizens, much less thoroughly good men, even in exterior demeanour and dealing. However, no laws of men can touch internal acts of virtue or vice; they may sometimes bind our hands, or bridle our mouths, or shackle our feet, but they cannot stop our Thoughts, they cannot still our passions, they cannot bend or break our inclinations; these things are beyond the reach of their cognizance, of their command, of their compulsion, or their correction; they cannot therefore render men truly good, or hinder them from being bad.

Upon which and the like considerations, it is plain enough, that setting aside the persuasion of a future judgment, all other incentives to virtue, and restraints from vice, which either common experience suggesteth, or Philosophical speculation may devise, are very weak and faint, and cannot reasonably promise considerable effect: the native beauty, and intrinsic worth of virtue; or its suitability to reason, and the dignity of our nature; the grace and commendation with which it decketh the practisers of it; its goodly, pleasant and wholesome fruits of manifold conveniences, of health to soul and body, of peace and amity among men, of tranquillity and satisfaction in mind, if they do not reach beyond this transitory life, cannot to the common apprehensions of men appear so considerable, or prove so efficacious, as to engage men closely and constantly to adhere thereto. Neither will the worst of evils innate or accessory to vice (its essential deformity and turpitude, or its being disagreeable to reason, and dishonourable to human nature, together with the distempers, the damages, the disgraces, the disturbances apt to sprout from it) if no more hereafter is to be feared in consequence thereof, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from it: the peril of death it self (the worst evil which men pretend to inflict, and that which our nature seemeth most

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to abhor) will not import much toward the diverting indigent, ambitious, or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts; it is the observation of Cicero, from which he inferreth the need of supposing future punishments, as the only effectual restraints from such actions. That, saith he,

Ut aliqua in vita formido improbiis esset, apud inferos ejusmodi quidam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt, quod videlicet intelligebant his remotis non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam. Cic. Catil. 4.

there might be in this life some fear laid upon wicked men, those antients did think good that there should be some punishments appointed in hell for impious persons; because indeed they understood, that setting these apart, death it self was not to be feared.

Cic. de Fin. 3. Tusc. 5.

There have been indeed vented such fine and stately notions as these; that Reason simply, however attended, doth challenge obedience to it self; that Virtue is abundantly its own reward, and Vice a compleat punishment to it self; that we should not in our practice be mercenary, regarding what profit or detriment will accrue from it, but should be good absolutely and gratis; that moral goods are the only desirable goods, and moral evils the only evils to be grieved at; that nothing can happen amiss to good men, and whatever their condition is they are

Cic. de Leg. 1. Sen. de Clem. 1. 1.

Neque bona, neque mala quæ vulgus putet; multos qui confictari adversis videntur beatos, ac plerosque quanquam magnas per opes miserrimos, si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerant, hi prosperâ inconsultè utantur. Tac. Ann. 6.

perfectly happy; that nothing can truly benefit ill men, or exempt them from misery. But these, and the like notions, frequently occurring in *Philosophers*, as they are (being rightly understood, or taken in a qualified sense) supposing Religion and a future Judgment, evidently reasonable and true (as also perhaps, even abstracting from that supposition, they

may have in them a kind of slim and dusky truth, discernable to one in a thousand, who is very sharp-sighted, and looketh most wittily on them; as they may be relished by a few persons of very refined spirit, or of special improvement) so to the common herd of people (unto whose inclinations and capacities, it is fit that the general rules of practice, and the most effectual inducements thereto should be squared) to men, immersed in the cares, the toils, and the temptations of the world, they plainly are unsutable; their grosser conceit cannot apprehend, their more rugged disposition will not admit such fine notions; they in effect, by the generality of men, have been slighted and exploded as incongruous to common sense and experience, as the dictates of affectation or simplicity; as the dreams of idle persons, addicted to speculation, and regardless of the world, such as it really doth exist, and will ever persist, while men continue endued with the same natural inclinations, and affections: so that from such notions little succour can be expected toward promoting Virtue, or restraining Vice in the world.

Upon these considerations the necessity, or great usefulness of supposing a Judgment doth appear; that it being cast into the scales may to the common understanding of men evidently render Virtue more considerable and eligible than Vice; as even in consequential profit and pleasure far surpassing it.

2. Whence manifestly the same supposition is also needful for the welfare of

Deos agere curam rerum humanarum, ex usu vita est; penasque maleficii, aliquando feras, nunquam autem irritas esse, &c. Plin. 11. 7.

humane society; the which, without the practice of justice, fidelity, and other virtues, can hardly subsist; without which practice indeed, a body of men would be worse than a company of wolves or foxes; and vain it were to think, that

it can any where stand without conscience; and conscience, without fear checking, or hope spurring it on, can be no more than a name: all societies therefore we see have been fain to call in the notion of a future Judgment to the aid of justice, and support of fidelity; obliging men to bind their testimonies by oaths, and plight their troth by Sacraments; implying a dread of that divine judgment, to which they solemnly do then appeal, and make themselves accountable.

3. But farther, the persuasion concerning a future judgment, is upon peculiar accounts, most requisite to the support of Religion, and defence of Piety.

It is certain, that no authority, upon whatever reason or equity grounded, if it do not present competent encouragements to obedient subjects, if it do not hold forth an armed hand, menacing chastisement to the refractory, will signify any thing, or be able to sustain the respect due to it; that no laws, however in themselves equal or commodious, if a certain account or trial, back'd with a dispensation of valuable rewards, and infliction of formidable punishments, be not annexed to them, will obtain any force, so as to be observed or regarded; that

no

no obligation whatever, of duty or gratitude, will prevail upon men; if they do not apprehend themselves under a constraint, to render an account, so as to be forced either to do reason, or to suffer for not doing it; so it is generally; and so it is even in regard to God, the Sovereign King and Governour of the world, as piety doth suppose him; his authority will never be maintained, his laws will never be obeyed, the duties towards him will never be minded, without influence upon the hopes and fears of men; they will not yield to him any reverence, they will no-wise regard his commands, if they may not from their respect and obedience expect good benefit, if they dread not a sore vengeance for their rebellion or neglect; nothing to them will seem more fond, than to serve him, who doth not well requite for the performance, than to revere him, who doth not soundly punish for the neglect of his service.

Forasmuch also as piety doth require duties somewhat high and hard, as much crossing the natural inclinations and desires of men, it peculiarly for the over-ruling such aversion, doth need answerably great encouragements to the practice, and determents from the transgression of what it requireth; upon which score it may also farther appear, that temporal judgments and recompences here are not sufficient to procure a due obedience to the laws of piety; for how indeed can he that for the sake of piety doth undergo disgrace, loss, or pain, expect to be satisfied here? What other benefits can he presume upon beside those, which he doth presently forfeit?

Of this particular God may seem designedly to have set before us a pregnant instance or experiment, worthy our consideration: God in a very notorious and affecting manner declared his will and law to the Jews; and to engage them to obedience, he not only recommended it to them as very good in it self, and very convenient for them to observe, but he enforced it with promises of the greatest blessings concerning this life, that men are capable of, if they should obey; and with curses or menaces of the most dismal mischiefs imaginable in reference to this life, in case of disobedience; that he both could and would in both respects make his word good, he did by miraculous dispensation of signal mercies and judgments most evidently shew and assure them: Yet what was the effect? it was that (as the Psalmist expresseth it) *They despised the pleasant land — and hearken-
ed not unto the voice of the Lord; Their heart was not right with God, neither were
they steadfast in his covenant; they tempted and provoked the most high God, and
kept not his testimonies*: they did not so value those benefits, they could not so dread those penalties, as in regard to them to persist for any time in a steady obedience; as not easily in despite of them to be drawn into the worst of crimes prohibited to them: the sweetest enjoyment of those good things could not hold them close to their duty, nor was the saddest smart of those evils able to reclaim them from sin; but even that very people (we may farther observe) having afterward (by sparks of light darted from the Prophets, or otherwise) obtained some clearer notions, and stronger persuasions concerning a future state, and rewards dispensed therein of higher consideration than any temporal ones here, became thereupon very constant and resolute in observance of their law; they proved valiant and fierce in defence thereof; they chose rather to endure the most grievous afflictions, than to transgress it, as the history of the Maccabees doth inform us: *2 Mac. 6. 26.
they (as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarked of them) waxed valiant in fight, and
turned to flight the armies of the aliens; they also were tortured, not accepting a
deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; this hope it was, which
then did raise them to so vigorous resolution, and so chearful patience. From
the same Apostle we also learn, that it was a sense of our being here in a transitory
state, and having an eye to the recompence of reward after this life, which did en-
gage the good Patriarchs and Prophets of the Old Testament so readily upon all
occasions to comply with God's will, and to perform the most difficult commands
by him imposed on them: these things they did, not, saith the Apostle, having
indeed received the promises (that is, not having the Evangelical Promises concern-
ing a future life in so formal and express a manner, as we now have proposed to
them;) but yet having seen them afar off, and having been persuaded of them, and
having embraced them, and having (in declaration of those perceptions and per-
suasions) confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon earth.*

Psal. 106. 24,
25. 78. 37, 56.

2 Mac. 6. 26.

7. 23, 29.

Heb. 11. 34.

35.

2 Mac. 7. 7.

Heb. 11. 26.

Heb. 11. 13.

The like observation might be made even concerning the Pagans, who while the persuasions concerning judgments and rewards after this life were retained in common vogue, did live more innocently and virtuously; but after those generally were discarded, so that the Satyrists could say, that scarce boys did believe any Ghosts, or subterraneous Judicatures, then did all wickedness mainly prevail and overflow. Comparing which things we may discern, as the weakness of con-

Esse aliquos manes, & subterranea regna
Vix pueri credunt. Juv. Sat. 2.

siderations merely regarding this present life, so the force of those, which concern a future state, in order to the procuring obedience to God's Laws; supposing both entertained with the same faith or persuasion of mind; from whence the necessity of that judgment, which we speak of, toward the maintenance of piety doth appear.

But beyond these things this point is very needful to secure the very foundations of all Religion and Piety, the existence of God, and his providence over human affairs: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof, and of a providence over us, apt to engage or encourage us to religious performances; without supposition of a judgment, and of a dispensation according to it of future rewards, cannot be well maintained; the objections assailing them would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, were we not furnished with this good shield to receive and repel them.

Τὸ πάσῃ εἴπας, αἰνέοντες θεῷ.
Eurip.

Eccl. 9. 1, 2. To find that of the Preacher certified by experience: No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: As is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that sweareth not.

Eccl. 10. 4. To behold virtue groveling on the ground, and trampled on, while vice is mounted on the perch, and sitteth proudly domineering; to view innocence and right sadly groaning under oppression, while fraud and violence do triumph and insult: which sights are obvious in the world, as the Preacher observed; I saw, said he, under the sun, the place of judgment, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there; I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed; on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter. So did Job also take notice, when he said, The tabernacles of the robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; and the Psalmist complained of wicked oppressors, They are inclosed in their own fat, and with their mouth they speak proudly: and the Prophet Malachy; Now we call the proud happy, yea they that work wickedness are set up, yea they that tempt God are delivered.

Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adspicerem, latosque diu florere nocentes
Versarique pios, rursus labefacta cadebat
Religio, &c. Claud. in Ruff. 1. init.

Eccles. 6. 15.

Dies deficiat si velim numerare, quibus bonis male evenerit, nec minus si commemorem, quibus improbis optime. Cic. de Nat. D. 3.
Dionysius 30 annos Tyrannus fuit opulentissima, & beatissima civitatis
arque in suo lectulo mortuus. Cic. ib.

To observe it frequently to happen, that most innocent and virtuous persons do conflict all their days with hardships and crosses; and sometime after all die sadly in pain, and under ignominy, while persons most outrageous in lewdness and iniquity do flourish and rant it out in a long undisturbed course of prosperity, and in the end depart hence fairly and quietly; according to that in Ecclesiastes; There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness; and there is a wicked man that longeth his life in wickedness: the former was the case of Socrates, of Phocion, of Regulus, of many other remarkably gallant and worthy persons; the latter, as Cicero observed of Dionysius, who after thirty years of unjust and cruel domination, in much splendour, died quietly in his bed.

Thus, I say, to see and consider, that commonly to just men it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, and to wicked men according to the work of the righteous (as the Preacher speaketh) that here piety with its best friends do suffer deeply, and impiety with its worst abettors do notably thrive; yea, that not only good men suffer, but often suffer for being good, (from envy and malignity of men that hate goodness) and that bad men not only prosper, but prosper by their wickedness (by their fraud and violence) hath been a huge scandal to religion,

Improbiorum prosperitates, secundaque res redarguunt (ut Diogenes dicebat) vim omnem Deorum & potestatem. Cic. ibid.

religion, which hath caused many to stumble, hath cast some quite down into the gulf of *Atheism*, or *Epicurism*; hath brought some men to doubt, hath induced others flatly to deny, that there is a God (that is, a most wise, powerful, just and good Being, every where present) or that he being, doth preside over, or any-wise concern himself in our affairs. From this source did flow all those impious conceits, which *Seneca* thus expressed: *One objecteth to the Gods neglect of us, another iniquity; another casts them out beyond his world, and leaves them forlorn as lazy and dull, without any light, or any work.* From hence it hath been, that in all places and times, there have been persons ready to say with those in the *Psalms*, *How doth God know, is there knowledge in the most High? The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it; God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, and will never see it.*

And not only upon blind *Pagans* and profane persons, but even upon the most pious of God's people these considerations have made impresson, extorting from their hearts and mouths expostulations like that of *Jeremy*: *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper, wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? And that of Job, Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, and are mighty in power? their seed is established in their sight, their houses are safe from fear, they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave; and that, Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldst despise the work of thine hand, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* Such questions did this kind of observations draw forth, and it shrewdly tempted them to a dissatisfaction in their pious practice, that they were ready to say with the *Psalmist*, *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency;* or with those in the Prophet, *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord? so that hence, their feet were almost gone, and their steps had well nigh slipped into a distrust of God's wise and just providence; they were moved to suspect, that God did not indeed bear that special regard to goodness, and affection to good men, that great hatred of iniquity, and displeasure toward the lovers of it, which religion supposed, as the main grounds of piety: thus, I say, have men, both good and bad, upon such occasions been induced, or tempted to doubt concerning those fundamental points; and that not without apparently weighty cause, admitting that all accounts are made up here in this life, between God and men; or that there is no reckoning behind to be adjusted in another world by divine justice and goodness; then indeed that saying, 'tis a reproach to the Deity that bad men do prosper, and good men suffer, hath a plausible semblance of truth; then he that affirmed, there was no God, and heaven to be a void place, proving his assertion hence, that while he thus affirmed, he found himself in a good case, did argue smartly; then *Diagoras*, from an unpunished perjury, collected probably, that God did not exist, or did not mind what was done here; for that being, and regarding things, he would not have endured himself to be so affronted, and those under his care so abused; then had*

Dionysius some reason to justify his sacrilege by his prosperous navigation from committing it; and with fair colour *Diogenes* might say, that *Harpalus* his successful treachery and rapine, did, *testimonium dicere adversos Deos*, bear testimony against the Gods, as guilty of injustice, or carelessness: these sort of discourses would, I say, upon excluding the supposition of future judgment, have some validity, or speciousness; and for want of that supposition we may observe the Apologies for providence, elaborately composed by some *Philosophers*, to be very lame and unsatisfactory. But supposing a judgment hereafter designed by God, and a proceeding with all men according thereto, all difficulty in these cases vaniseth, all objections have plainly no moment or force: Then God's present connivance, or patient indulgence toward wicked men will signify no more, than

*Ἡ Χρηὶς μὴδ' ἠγνοῦσθε θεοὺς, εἰρη-
νὴν ἔσται τῆς ψυχῆς ὑμῶν. Eurip.
El. 8.*

*Vid. Luc. in Jup. Confut. Plut. de
placitis, &c. Plin. 11. 7.*

*Alius illis objicit negligentiam nostri,
alius iniquitatem; alius illos extra mun-
dum suum projicit, & ignavos hebetesque
illos sine luce, sine ullo opere destituit.
Sen. de Benef. 7. 31.*

How doth God know, is there knowledge in the most High? The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it; God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, and will never see it.

*Quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique
sectam eorum amulantur, diversos reperies;
ac multis instam opinionem non initia no-
stri, non finem, non denique homines Divi
cura; ideo creberrima & tristitia in bonos,
lata apud deteriores esse. Tac. Ann. VI.*

Jer. 12. 1. Job 21. 7.

neither is the rod of God upon them — they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave; and that, Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldst despise the work of thine hand, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

Job 10. 3.

Such questions did this kind of observations draw forth, and it shrewdly tempted them to a dissatisfaction in their pious practice, that they were ready to say with the *Psalmist*, *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency;* or with those in the Prophet, *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord? so that hence, their feet were almost gone, and their steps had well nigh slipped into a distrust of God's wise and just providence; they were moved to suspect, that God did not indeed bear that special regard to goodness, and affection to good men, that great hatred of iniquity, and displeasure toward the lovers of it, which religion supposed, as the main grounds of piety: thus, I say, have men, both good and bad, upon such occasions been induced, or tempted to doubt concerning those fundamental points; and that not without apparently weighty cause, admitting that all accounts are made up here in this life, between God and men; or that there is no reckoning behind to be adjusted in another world by divine justice and goodness; then indeed that saying, 'tis a reproach to the Deity that bad men do prosper, and good men suffer, hath a plausible semblance of truth; then he that affirmed, there was no God, and heaven to be a void place, proving his assertion hence, that while he thus affirmed, he found himself in a good case, did argue smartly; then *Diagoras*, from an unpunished perjury, collected probably, that God did not exist, or did not mind what was done here; for that being, and regarding things, he would not have endured himself to be so affronted, and those under his care so abused; then had*

Θεὸν ὠρεῖται τὸς κακοὺς διδύμοισιν.

*Nullos esse Deos, inane calum,
Affirmat felius, probatque quod se
Factum, dum negat hæc, videt beatum.
Mart. 4. 20.*

*Sunt nobis nulla profecto
Numina, cum celo rapiantur secula casu
Mentimur regnare Jovem, &c.
Luc. VII. 445.*

what most becometh him as God and Governour of the world, his most excellent goodness and admirable clemency toward his creatures and subjects, in *waiting to be gracious*, and providing for their return to a better mind; affording them time, and means of reforming their minds and manners, that so they may escape the stroke of final vengeance; so in most cases, and in some also signifying his wise justice in suffering bad men to proceed forward to an inexcusable pitch of guilt, in order to their more clearly just condemnation, and severe punishment hereafter; that be-

Rom. 9. 22. Jer. 12. 3.
*Ἀγρίων αὐτοὺς εἰς ἡμέραν ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐ-
 τῶν. 70.*

*Ut victimæ saginantur, ut hostia coro-
 nantur. Min. Fel.*

*Justis quicquid malorum irrogatur, non
 est pœna criminis, sed virtutis examen.
 Aug.*

*Experitur, indurat, sibi ipsam præpa-
 rat. Sen. de Prov. 1.*

*Vid. Chryl.
 ἀνδρ. α.*

*Semper esse felicem, & sine morfu ani-
 mi transire vitam, ignorare est rerum naturam
 alteram partem. Sen. de Prov. 4.*

Plal. 119. 67.
 71, 75.
 No Martyrs,
 if no Perle-
 cution.
 Magnum ex-
 emplum nisi
 mala fortuna
 non invenit.
 Sen. de Prov.
 3.
 2 Cor. 4. 17.
 Rom 8. 18.
 Matt. 5. 12.

ing *κατασκευάζει εἰς ἀποθνήσκειν*, *thoroughly fit* (as S. Paul speaketh) or ripe for perdition, being prepared (as the Prophet Jeremy expreſſeth it, or *sanctified*) for the slaughter, being by their present case, and abused prosperity, become fat and fair, they may fall more proper victims to divine severity.

Then also from God's permitting good men to suffer, how smartly soever, nothing can be inferr'd prejudicial unto divine goodness, or justice; since they are thereby made fitter for, and do attain a surer title to those excellent rewards, which he upon such tryal and approbation of their virtues doth intend to confer upon them; especially considering, that afflictions are necessary both as means of rendring men good, and as occasions of expressing their goodness; that scarce any virtue could subsist, or could appear without them.

There could be no such thing as Patience, if there were no adversities to be endured; no such thing as contentedness, if there were no wants to be felt; no such thing as industry, if there were no pains to be taken; no such thing as humility, if sensible infirmities and crosses did not prompt us to sober thoughts, and shew us what we are. There would be no true wisdom, no

clear knowledg of our selves, or right judgment of things, without experiencing the worst half of things. We should never learn to master our passions, or temper our appetites, or wrest our inclinations to a compliance with reason, if that

discipline were away, which the Holy Psalmist intimateth, saying; *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.* How much we do love God, how submissive we are to God's will, how little we do value these mean things here, we cannot otherwise, than by willingly undergoing, or patiently bearing afflictions, well expreſs; without it no sure trial of virtue can be, without it no excellent example of goodness had ever been. As therefore it is necessary, that good men, even that they may be good, should suffer here; so it is supposing a future judgment, very just that they should do so; that they may acquire a title to the rewards following it; rewards far outweighing the light afflictions they are put to endure here.

In reference therefore to the present impunity of bad men, and letting iniquity to prevail, or to proceed here, that which cured David, Job and Solomon may satisfie us; going into the sanctuary, and understanding the end of those men; considering that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and shall be brought out to the day of wrath; that after all their jollity and pleasure, God for all these things will bring them into judgment. In regard to the righteous being afflicted here, that of S. Paul may suffice, saying of them; *It is a manifest instance of God's righteous judgment, that they may be made worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which they suffer; that of our Saviour, Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and shall reproach you; rejoyce ye in that day, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in heaven; that of Solomon, Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely, I know, that it shall be well with them that fear God: In respect to both sorts of men, that of S. Peter will resolve all doubt; God knoweth how to deliver the godly out of trials, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; all scores will be fully quitted by the execution of that sentence pronounced by our Judge himself: The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*

This Hypothesis doth indeed even to our common sense thoroughly solve most of those appearances in the course of things here, which otherwise might seem intricate or strange; clearing providence from all misprisions, and satisfying our minds so far as is needful, concerning the reasons of most occurrences here: from it we may learn,

That

That God in his great *drama*, made up of his providence, and our free-will concurrently or interchangeably acting, doth mean, in order to this *catastrophe* of judgment in the last and chief Act, to let men go on, playing their parts undisturbedly, according to their inclinations and humours, yet within certain limits, and under the check of his hand, in proper seasons, to prevent confusion of all, interposing it self.

Δὶς γὰρ ἔτι καὶ πρὸς τοὺς καλοὺς καὶ τοὺς κακοὺς ὁ θεὸς ἐπεμύνηται, ὥστε καὶ τοὺς καλοὺς καὶ τοὺς κακοὺς ἀποδοῦναι τὸ ἴδιον. Chryl. in Matt. Or. 11.

That it is not therefore fit now by open significations, either of approbation or dislike, often to interrupt the process of humane actions; especially considering that the final doom concerning persons, is not to be grounded upon single passages, or the particular acts of one time, but upon the whole body of action passing through the course of each man's part, in the place and time allotted to him; and that he, who now acteth laudably, may, before all is done, come to faulter: he that now behaveth himself untowardly, may afterward learn to do better, and in the end come off well.

That hence it is not to be wondred, that God here should be somewhat reserved in dispensing testimonies of favour to those, who at present do seem good, somewhat sparing in declaring wrath toward those, who now appear bad; that he should not miraculously pour down golden showers on the heads of the righteous, nor send fire from heaven, as angry men would have him, upon every provocation, to consume sinners.

Eccles. 3. 11. 8. 17. 11. 5.

Luke 9. 55.

That this life is not a time of reaping, but of sowing; not of approbation, but of trial; not of triumph, but of combat; this world is not a place of enjoyment, but of work; our condition here is not a state of settlement, but of travel: whence no man should expect more of encouragement, than is needful to support him in this work and way; should look to receive wages before his task is done; to get the prize, before he hath gone through the race; to gather the spoils, before he hath fought out the battle; to enjoy rest, before he is at his journey's end; to be put in full possession of happiness, before his right and title thereto is compleatly assured: That no man also should presume or please himself upon present impunity for his misbehaviour or sloth (like those of whom the Preacher saith, *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*) seeing this is the season of mercy and patience, when God commonly doth not farther inflict crosses on us, than may serve to mind us of our duty, or urge us to the performance of it; and seeing the longer vengeance is withheld, the more heavy it will at last fall on us, if we despise the present season of grace, and proceed to the end in impenitence: That present impunity therefore is a fore punishment, and correction here a really great favour.

Eccles. 8. 11.

That ordinarily temporal prosperity and adversity, as in comparison to things relating to our future state, they are plainly inconsiderable, so they can be no arguments of God's special favour or displeasure; whence it appeareth to be no small rashness to conclude how God stands affected to any person from what befalleth him here (as those who infer'd concerning the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mixed with their sacrifices; and concerning those Jews, upon whom the Tower in Siloam did fall, that they were more sinners than others of their nation) yea, that if we must be interpreting God's mind from these occurrences, it is rather more reasonable to conceive, that God disliketh them whom he doth not check, and approveth them whom he chastiseth; whence the prosperity of bad men is rather pitiable, than invidious, as that which aggravateth and strengthneth their wickedness, which accumulateth guilt, which draweth them forward, and plungeth them deeper into perdition; that the adversity of good men is no misery, but a blessing and happiness to them; as exercising and fortifying their virtues, ensuring their state, endearing them to God: however,

Luke 13. 1; 14. 34.

Prov. 3. 12. Job 5. 17. Heb. 12. 7. Apoc. 3. 19. Prov. 23. 17. Luke 16. 25.

That God plainly doth mean to vilify these present things, appearing to our sense good or evil, by scattering them abroad with an indifferent hand; so that his friends taste as little good, and as much evil, as his enemies.

Nulla modo potest Deus magis concupita traducere, quam si illa in turpissimos desert, ab optimis abigit. Sen. de Prov. 5.

That there is no reason to wonder, or to complain, that things here do not go on in a course so smooth and streight, as they should do; for that vanity and iniquity have their

Dantur bonis ne putentur mala, dantur malis ne putentur summa bona. Aug.

part and time to act upon this stage, yea are allowed sometimes a seeming reign ; but Justice, though at present it seemeth to sleep, or to wink at things, will at length awake, and effectually bestir it self ; that Right, although here it may be sometime crossed, or foiled, yet it can never be quell'd or overthrown ; it may be suspended, but cannot be suppressed ; it may be somewhat eclipsed, but it cannot be quite extinguished ; yea infallibly in the end it will triumphantly prevail.

That no good design shall be undertaken, nor any honest labour can be spent in vain, seeing although they chance to find no success, or to yeild no fruit here, yet they cannot fail to obtain a happy issue, and a plentiful reward hereafter.

That how small soever the difference doth now appear between wise men, and fools (or between virtuous and vicious persons) there will be hereafter a vast discrimination made, when in consequence of that upright trial one shall enter into eternal bliss, the other shall fall into an abyss of misery.

That this life is not contemptible, nor all things here utterly vain ; seeing that upon this life is founded our eternal state ; seeing these occurrences have influence upon our eternal joy, or woe ; seeing all things here will conduce to the illustration of divine mercy, or justice. That God is indeed here *Deus absconditus* (as the Prophet stileth him) a God that hideth himself ; advisedly suffering his goodness and justice to be under a cloud, that at length they may break out more gloriously in that day, when (as S. Paul saith) his *inimicitia*, his most righteous dealing (both in governance of all affairs now, and in deciding of all cases then) shall be revealed, and made conspicuous to all the world.

Isa. 45. 15.

Rom. 2. 5.

Thus doth it, upon many accounts, appear fit and needful, that there should be a future judgment ; the apprehension thereof being the sharpest spur to virtue, the strongest curb from vice, the surest fence of human society, the safest bulwark of Religion (securing the authority of God, and guarding his providence, together with all his holy attributes, from all batteries, all sinister aspersions, all profane misconstructions) in short, the most effectual means, if it be heartily embraced, to render men in their minds, and in their enjoyments sober, just in their dealings toward their neighbour, and in all their life pious toward God ; there being indeed no consideration, whereof the mind of man is capable, more apt to beget in him a care and conscience of what he doeth, than this ; that after a very short and transitory life, all his actions must undergo a strict scrutiny, according to the result whereof he shall be either approved and rewarded, or condemned and punished ; whereof any man being thoroughly perswaded, and any-wise considering it, he cannot surely but accuse himself of extream folly, and madness, if he doth not provide for that account, and order all his practice with a regard thereto. The which use of this point God by his grace dispose us to make, for the sake of Jesus our blessed Redeemer, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

1 Thes. 5. 23.

Now the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly ; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

from

**From thence He shall come to judg
the quick and the dead.**

S E R M O N XXXIII.

**The Certainty and Circumstances of a
Future Judgment, from Divine Re-
velation.**

ACTS X. 42.

*And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it is
he which was ordained by God to be judge of quick and dead.*



THESE words are part of a *Sermon* preached by S. Peter to *Cornelius* and his friends, wherein the *Apostle* briefly declareth unto them the chief particulars in the history of *Christ*, together with some main points of Christian doctrine most fit for them to know; particularly he doth in these words express the point concerning the *future Judgment*; reporting that our Lord especially did charge his Apostles *to preach unto the people and testify*, that is, first publickly to declare and explain, then by convenient proofs, especially by divine attestations, to evince and perswade this point; the importance whereof, and eminence among other Christian doctrines doth hence plainly appear, that the author of our faith did make so special provision, and gave so express charge concerning the promulgation and probation thereof: the which circumstance is indeed remarkable and weighty; but I shall not insist on it, meaning immediately to set upon considering the point it self, as it is here laid down in these terms — *that it is he which was ordained by God to be Judge of quick and dead*: In which words are couched *three* particulars most considerable;

1. A judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men.
2. The Judge by whom immediately that judgment is administred, *He*; *Jesus*, our Lord and Saviour.
3. The extent of that judgment, or its adequate object, *quick and dead*.

These particulars I shall in order touch, inserting some material considerations about the nature and manner of this judgment, with some reasons why it should be thus managed; then I shall adjoin some practical applications.

I. There is a judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men; that is, concerning the persons and actions of men performed in this life. How just and fit it is that there should be such a judgment, how useful and requisite the declaration thereof is upon several accounts (for engaging men upon the practice of Virtue, and restraining them from Vice; for the preservation and maintenance of human Society, for the support and defence of Religion, for the vindication of divine Providence, and illustration of all God's holy Attributes) I have already endeavoured to declare; and in that regard I shall content my self now to say, that as upon the apparent equity and usefulness of this doctrine, all nations com-

Just. M. p. 1. commonly have ever embraced the general substance thereof, as a fundamental principle of their Religion (all men commonly with a ready inclination having avowed it reasonable to suppose, that every man after this life shall be brought unto a just and impartial bar, where his doings shall be exactly scan'd, and his person answerably doomed unto a comfortable or afflictive recompence) so our Religion in a peculiar manner doth most expressly assert, most clearly describe, and most vigorously inculcate it, with all possible advantage, both for the clearing God's dealings and attributes, and for the excitement of men to a virtuous and pious life; the nature, manner, process and result of the future judgment are in the Holy Scripture most punctually set down.

1. It teacheth us, that God hath appointed a determinate time for this judgment: *God (saith S. Paul) hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness; that which is called the day of judgment, the last day, the day of the Lord, the great, and the illustrious day; and by signal excellency, The day; and, That day; intimating, beside the certainty of the thing it self, the most especial regard, that men are concerned to bear thereto.*

2. That in order to this judgment all the actions of men are with greater exactness registred in books (the books of divine omniscience, seeing all things present, and retaining all things past, which nothing can escape) *The books (tis said in the Revelation) were opened, and the dead were judged from the things written in the books, according to their works.*

3. That in order thereto, there shall be effected by Divine Power and Command a general resurrection of all persons, both just and unjust: *The hour (saith our Lord) is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.*

4. That then all persons so raised shall be presented at the bar of our Lord to answer and undergo their trial. *I saw (saith S. John) the great and small standing before God's Throne; and, We must all (saith S. Paul) be made appear, and be set forth at the judgment seat of Christ; and, The son of man (saith our Lord) shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered together before him.*

5. That then and there every thought, every word, every work of men shall be thoroughly disclosed and discuffed; so that it, together with its due quality and desert, shall plainly appear; all the designs and pretences of men shall be laid bare; every case shall be considered, every plea heard and scan'd, the merits of every cause weighed in an even balance, according to truth and equity; Mens neglects and omissions of duty shall also come under consideration; an account will be exacted of all the talents entrusted to any man (of the abilities, opportunities and advantages he ever had of doing God service) and of what improvements answerable he hath made; what men have done themselves, and what they have done by others from the influence of their advice, their persuasion, or their example, shall be searcht out, and poised; *God (saith S. Paul) will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts; and, Of every idle word, that men shall speak, they shall render an account at the day of judgment, saith our Lord; and, After a long time (saith he again) the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them, &c. and, Every work (saith the Preacher) God shall bring into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

6. That upon each man, according to the true quality of his doings, thus detected, examined, and stated, a definitive sentence shall pass, whereby he shall be acquitted, and approved, or condemned and reprobated; *then (saith S. Paul) praise shall be to each one; praise, that is generally (by an evengood, or favourable manner of speech) a due taxation and esteem, according to merit; then, Well done good and faithful servant; and, O thou bad, and slothful servant, shall be pronounced to one, or t'other sort of men, respectively, according to their demeanour here.*

7. That according to the purport of this sentence a discrimination shall be made; and to one party a gracious reward, correspondent to the quality and measure of their good works in a blissful place, to the other a sorer punishment, in proportion to their demerits, in a place of misery; to the one everlasting joy and

and glory above in heaven, to the other endless sorrow and shame beneath in hell, shall be assigned, and dispensed effectually. *The son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works*; He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left; then the King shall say unto them on his right hand, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World* — and, Then he shall say also unto them on the left hand, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*. And, the good and faithful servant shall enter into his Master's joy, the bad and slothful shall be cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth; so our Lord himself expresseth it; and S. Paul thus, *We must, saith he, all appear before the tribunal of God, that each one may bear away the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good, or bad; and, God will render to every man according to his works — to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil: and even of old the Prophet Daniel thus briefly did express this different doom; Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt*. Hence in regard to one party is the time of judgment stiled the season of refreshment, the day of redemption, the time of recompence; in reference to the other, the day of wrath, the day of destruction, the time of vengeance; when our Lord will, as S. Paul saith, *take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*.

8. We are also farther taught, that all this shall be transacted in a regular, publick, and most solemn manner, in open court, in the face and audience of all the world, before Angels and men. For our Lord is described coming to judgment with attendance of all the Holy Angels; and the Saints, being themselves first approved, shall become assessors there; and all men are represented as present at the trial, or as spectators and auditors thereof: *Whosoever (saith our Lord) shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the Angels of God: but he that denyeth me before men, shall be denied before the Angels of God*. And, *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known: whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and that which ye have spoken in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops*.

9. That also the judgment shall pass to the full conviction, and entire satisfaction of all that are present; so that each one concerned therein shall be forced in conscience to acquiesce in his doom, as most just and equal; the condemned stooping with awe to his justice; the absolved adoring with humble reverence his mercy; the spectators applauding with admiration his holy wisdom: for that day will be, as S. Paul calleth it, *a day of revelation of God's righteous judgment*; and God in regard thereto is represented speaking thus; *To me, as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall give glory to God; and our Lord, in that day, saith S. Paul, will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe; and, He will then (as it is in S. Jude) convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of all the hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him*. So that thereupon those confessions, and acclamations of praise in the Revelation shall be refounded through heaven; *Allelujah, salvation and glory, and power be to the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments. Salvation be unto our Lord, that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb: Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of Saints*.

Thus do the holy Pandects of our Religion set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein all the attributes of God shall be conspicuously glorified; his wonderful clemency shall be sweetly displayed, his exact justice shall be terribly demonstrated, his perfect wisdom shall be clearly unfolded; wherein the knotty intrigues of providence shall be loosed, and the mysterious depths of the divine counsels shall be laid open; and God's honour, which now by the bold and rash judgments of men is often attack'd, shall be thoroughly

cleared and repaired, to the joyful satisfaction of all pious men, and sad confusion of the impious; wherein the great wisdom of those, who before all things chuse to be good, and to serve God, and the extreme folly of those who scorn or neglect piety, shall be most evidently apparent; wherein finally all scores, that now so undiscernably run on, shall be exactly quitted, and even; impartial right shall be done; every man shall have his due assigned and rendred to him.

But let so much suffice concerning the Judgment appointed; we proceed to the next particular, The Judge ordained, *He*, that is, *Jesus* our Lord and Saviour.

II. The original right, and absolute power of judging doth inseparably pertain to God Almighty, whose creatures, whose servants, whose subjects we are, and consequently to whose judgment we stand obnoxious. As he is naturally the Sovereign Lord and King of the world, so he is, as the *Apostle* calleth him, *Heb. 12. 13.* *veritas patet*, the *Judge of all* persons and things; and particularly, *Judge of all* *Gen. 18. 29.* *the earth*, or of all men, as *Abraham* did stile him. As upon the grounds specified we do owe obedience to the Laws he prescribeth us, performance of the service he allotteth us, and improvement of the talents he committeth to us; so we do thence stand obliged to render an account to him of our correspondent behaviour, and due management in those respects, and are liable to the judgment he shall make thereof: All judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, and by virtue of authority derived from him; otherwise that of *S. Paul*, *Who art thou that judgest anothers servant*, might be alledged against any, who without licence, or commission from him should presume to judge us. *Rom. 14. 4.*

Now that immediately God should administer any judgment, is incongruous to his nature, and to ours; it is particularly unsuitable to the manner of this

Etenim ea qua judicantur, oportebat videre judicem & scire hunc a quo judicantur, &c. Iren. 3. 9.

Rectum erat, ut judicandi viderent judicem. Aug.

judgment, which God designeth to be such, as may pass openly before all the world, to the conspicuous declaration of his glorious justice and mercy, to the clear satisfaction and conviction of all persons interested therein: which that it might be, *it was fit* (as *S. Austin* saith) *that they who are to be judged should see their Judge*; it is fit, that the assistants,

and spectators, or witnesses thereof should discern the process: but the glorious and dreadful presence of God cannot be discernable by us, or would not be sup-

portable: *He* (saith *S. Paul*) *inhabiteth inaccessible light, so that no man hath seen, or can see him*; and, *Thou canst not see my face* (saith he to *Moses*) *for there shall*

Exod. 33. 20. *no man see me and live*: that Majesty, before which the purest Seraphims, being

dazled with its infinite brightness, are constrained to veil their faces; that pre-

sence, of which the Prophet saith, *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt,*

Nah. 1. 5. *and the earth is burnt in his presence; yea the world, and all that dwell therein.*

How should frail and impure flesh sustain? How should guilty sinners appear be-

fore him? *Who may stand in his sight when he is angry?* when he is angry, at

Psalm. 76. 7. *whose wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his in-*

133. 5. *dignation*: What ear of mortal man could endure that voice, at which the earth

Jer. 10. 10. *melteth, that reproof, at which the pillars of heaven are astonished?* It being there-

fore from the divine excellency impossible, or inconvenient, that God himself

immediately, as such, should exercise judgment, it hath pleased him, in his stead,

to constitute one most fit for that employment: as he for particular temporal judg-

ments here hath appointed Princes and Governours visibly to manage them as his

Ministers and Vicegerents, in his name and behalf; so that universal and ultimate

judgment, he hath (for his own greater glory, and our special benefit) committed

unto his loving Son *Jesus*, our blessed Mediator and Saviour; the same, who

with the most admirable condescension of grace and charity, did once come hi-

ther in our nature to rescue us from sin and misery; who underwent so many cro-

sses and troubles for us; who freely laid down his life to redeem and save us; he

it is, who is *deus pater & fili & spiritus sanctus*, decreed and determined by God (or under him,

as his substitute and deputy) *to be our Judge*; so in our Text; and so again *S.*

Paul, *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness,*

2 Cor. 5. 10. *in a die & tempore*, by the man, or in the man, whom he hath ordained; whence it is

called, *the judgment seat of Christ*, before which we must appear; and, *The Father*

(saith our Lord himself) *judgeth no man* (that is immediately and separately) *but*

hath

hath given all judgment to the Son; and, The Father (he addeth) hath given to the Son the authority, and to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man; that is, God hath conferr'd on him the sovereign regal authority, and hath particularly committed to him that prime branch thereof, Judicial power, even as he is the Son of man: so that as in our nature he performed all that was requisite to save us, as in our nature he was exalted to God's right hand to rule and bless us; so for consummation of all done in our regard, he shall in our nature appear to judge us; awarding to us the rewards he purchased for us, or punishments for the contempt of his favours.

Illa forma videbitur Filii, quam sibi per sacramentum incarnationis univit; &c. Prosp. Sent. 337.

And indeed that he under this name and notion was designed to this office, even the antient Prophets did foreshew; for it was *one like the Son of man*, whom *Daniel did behold coming with the clouds of heaven*, having all royal dominion and power given unto him; and it was according to *Esay's* predictions, the *Son born and given unto us, upon whose shoulder the government should be*, and to whom the Kingdom should be assigned, *to order it, and establish it, with judgment and justice for ever.*

The point then is manifest, that our Saviour *Jesus*, by designation and deputation from God, is invested with this eminent office and power. And why it should be so, many reasons, many fair congruities may be assigned.

1. It was requisite (as we before touched) that the Judge should be visible, and audible; such whom the parties concerned might (without extreme surprize and amazement) discern and converse with, in order to their clearer and fuller satisfaction, or conviction: such our Lord, the Son of man, clothed with glorified flesh, will be; his mild and sweet, though bright and stately aspect, all men in some manner may be capable of seeing; his calm and clear voice all men may hear: Him the just may with chearful satisfaction behold smiling on them with gracious kindness, and the wicked also with sad confusion may view frowning toward them with just disdain; those with comfortable joy may hear him acquitting, commending and blessing them; these with due regret also may hear him convincing, reproofing, and denouncing the fatal curse on them; so that hereupon the former with humble thankfulness shall willingly acknowledge and praise his grace, the latter with shameful horror constrainedly shall confess their guilt before him: *Behold* (saith *S. John*, with an emphatical regard it seems to this consideration) *he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him, even they who pierced him; and, They, saith our Lord himself, shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven, in power, and great glory*; and, our Lord is represented in judgment, speaking and arguing the case with all parties concerned, receiving their plea, and expressing his mind to them: This is a kind of natural capacity qualifying him for this employment, but there are considerations of a higher nature peculiarly fitting him for it.

2. It was indeed a good part of that Regal Office, which God, in reward of his obedience, and to declare his acceptance thereof, did confer upon him; giving him *a power over all flesh, all authority in heaven and earth*: whence it is by *S. Paul* called *his Kingdom*; *I charge thee*, saith he to *Timothy*, *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom*: He being then our King, and as such the fountain of all justice, must either himself in person, or by some delegate administer it; but that he should immediately do it, divers special reasons do suggest themselves.

3. It is an office of too great eminence and dignity to be imparted to any other: He alone who subsists in union with God, who is the Son of God, who hath most highly pleased God, who hath merited a Sovereignty over us, and a supreme eminency above all creatures, is capable of the honour to determine those points of the highest importance concerning the final doom of God's Creatures, and the salvation of those souls whom he hath purchased: *Worthy is he alone to receive the book (of Judgment) and to open the seals thereof, because he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood: Worthy is the Lamb (worthy exclusively and solely) that was slain, to receive the power, and honour, the glory and blessing, annexed to this high office.*

As there is nothing more apt to beget in us veneration toward him, than considering that he shall be our Judge, upon whose sentence our fate and felicity must

depend; so it is therefore most fit, that it incommunicably, and solely should belong to him; especially seeing God with especial regard to his honour did assign the judicial office to him; the *Father*, 'tis said, *hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, as they do the Father.*

4. He alone also hath capacities proper for this judicature: he only hath that divine faculty of searching mens hearts; he only is furnished with wisdom to know

*Διδόντες τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὴν μάθησιν, ὅτι ἀνα-
μνηστικὸς μόνος.* Clem. Al. *Paed.* l. 2.

all matters of fact that ever were, and to discern the right in every case; he above all being absolutely good, is endued with perfect equity of mind, and immutable love of right,

Heb. 5. 2. always disposing him to judge most justly; he alone can have in him that *μετάνοια*, or exact temperament of affection toward men, which is requisite to the distribution of equal justice toward them; according to due measures of mercy and severity; the highest Angel in heaven were incapable so rightly to distinguish the strict bounds of these things. Wherefore in regard to these dispositions peculiar to him, we are even by the antient Prophets informed, that this office is allotted

Isa. 11. 2, 3. to him; *The Spirit of the Lord, saith Esay, shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom — and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears;*

Isa. 42. 3. *but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth. And, A bruised reed (saith God in the same Prophet, intimating his incomparable sagacity, equity and temper, as it were, for this purpose) shall he not break,*

Psal. 45. 7. *and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. And, Thou, saith the Psalmist concerning him, lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

5. By this designation the glory of God is especially promoted, his most excellent attributes being much illustrated thereby: his wisdom appeareth in constituting one so in all respects most fit to discharge the office; and his goodness most clearly shines therein: for since it was requisite that a judgment should pass upon us, how could the terror thereof be better allayed, than by putting it into the hands of his Son? to whose cognizance, were the choice permitted to us, should we rather submit our actions, than to his? to whom rather should we freely commit all our life and welfare, than to him, who by nature is so nearly allied to us, and hath not disdained to call us brethren? who in disposition of spirit is so meek and lowly, so merciful and compassionate? who here was visibly in disposition and demeanour a Lamb, and is represented to us continuing such; than to him, who by so many signal experiments hath expressed an excess of kindness towards us, and tenderness of our welfare: who hath conspicuously evidenced himself to be the best friend to mankind; that he ardently desireth the salvation of men, even of his worst enemies, for whom he willingly did spend his blood, for whom he dying earnestly prayed; whom he continually woeth to reconciliation and repentance, and consequently to the enjoyment of greatest happiness? how then could God more plainly express his goodness toward us, than in assigning such a Judge for us?

How also could he exhibit a more illustrious instance of his justice, and love to righteousness, than in advancing him to so glorious an office, who out of perfect compliance to his will did freely stoop so low, and gladly undergo so much? *Worthy of God it was, and a congruous retribution to place the Crown on his head, to put the Scepter into his hand, who willingly bore a cross, who patiently submitted to a scourge; to constitute him the Judge, who out of abundant piety to God, and charity to God's creature, was contented to be arraigned, to be sentenced, to be executed as a malefactor: he dearly purchased the right to be Lord of dead and living, and just it was that in effect he should obtain it.*

6. Just it likewise was, that to him, immediately and solemnly, should be assigned a power to acknowledge and reward his faithful friends and servants; those who had believed his word, had observed his laws, had out of love and respect done much, and suffered much for him.

Just also it was, that he should be empowered to do himself right upon his proud and spiteful enemies; that he should see them lying under his feet, and at his disposal, who had so scornfully insulted on him, and so cruelly misused him; that he righteously should judge them, who so maliciously had accused, and so injuriously con-

condemned him; should chastise them severely, who most unmercifully had afflicted and slaughtered him; should worthily reprobate all those, who had unworthily rejected him; in fine, that he should render a due recompence to all wicked persons, who by distrusting his word, by despising his overtures of grace and mercy, by resisting his will, and rejecting his authority, by trampling upon his holy doctrine and laws, had wronged, had dishonoured, had disclaimed him.

7. This appointment of Jesus for our Judge is farther very conducive to our edification, in way of excitement to the practice of our duty, and encouragement thereto; in way of consolation and satisfaction to our Soul.

It considered is apt to raise in us a high reverence and dread of our Saviour, and consequently to dispose us to the observance of his laws, and imitation of his example.

It is matter of special comfort and encouragement to consider, that hence assuredly we shall find a fair and favourable trial; since 'tis no enemy, not one disaffected, yea, not one indifferently affected toward us, who shall judge us, but our best friend; from whom we may expect not only justice and equity, but all the favour and kindness our cause will bear.

It also duly pondered is most proper to work in us an earnest care, and fear of sinning, and thereby of becoming obnoxious to condemnation; for what an aggravation will it yield to our whether foolish perverseness, or slothful negligence? how extream disingenuity, how wretched ingratitude will it argue in us to be cast and condemned by such a judge; a judge so fair and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign and favourable to us; so willing to acquit us, so desirous to save us? With what face think we, having transgressed his most good and righteous laws, having rejected all his gracious tenders of mercy and favour, having defeated all his most serious purposes, and frustrated his most painful endeavours for our welfare; having violated our manifold obligations and engagements to him; having abused his so unexpressibly great love and good will toward us; having hence deplorably forfeited all his favour, and incurred his most grievous displeasure; with what face, I say, having done all this shall we appear in his presence? how then shall we bear the frowns of his tender love changed into fierce disdain, of highest patience turned into extream fury, of so terrible a Majesty provoked by so heinous affronts? with what heart shall we hear that once most sweet and charming voice, which in so pleasant and affectionate a strain did sound forth words of peace and comfort in our ears, that so kindly invited us to reconciliation, so meek- 2 Cor. 5. 20. ly sued us to a compliance with him, so liberally offered to us the best things in the world upon so gentle terms, now only uttering toward us bitter complaints, and fore rebukes; thundring forth words of indignation and terror, denouncing most horrible menaces and curses upon us?

Thus, and to such purposes is Jesus our Lord appointed to be our Judge: I shall only farther touch the manner of his exercising, and executing this Office, or the way of his address and proceeding thereto; the which in *Holy Scripture* (for the begetting in us a regard, veneration and awe suitable thereto) is described to be with greatest glory, state and solemnity. Our Lord came once in a meek humility to shew us our duty, but he shall come again with a dreadful majesty to exact an account thereof; taking his progress from the highest Heavens in most royal magnificent equipage, attended upon with a numerous, or with a numberless, and most pompous train of Angels, (*with all the Holy Angels*, it is expressly said) accompanied with triumphal shouts and acclamations; a trumpet of God (that is, a wonderfully and unconceivably sonorous trumpet, blown as it were by the mouth of God) and the voice of an Arch-angel resounding before him an Universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as shall immediately (*in a moment*, in the twinkling of an eye) shake all the earth, and rouse all the dead out of their mortal slumber; the irresistible breath of that all-powerful voice wafting them, together with all surviving people, through the clouds into the presence of their Judge, conspicuously seated in most glorious State on his Royal Tribunal.

This same Jesus (said the two Angels to the Apostles expressing this matter in the most simple and plain manner) shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven; a cloud took him up from their eyes then, and the clouds, as they imply, should restore him to their sight; for, Behold, saith S. John, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him. And, They shall see the Son of man coming upon

Heb. 12. 22.

Matt. 25. 31.

Jude 14.

1 Thes. 4. 16.

2 Thes. 1. 7.

1 Cor. 15. 52.

1 Thes. 4. 17.

Matt. 25. 31.

Acts 1. 11.

Apoc. 1. 7.

Matt. 24. 30.

upon 16. 64.

Matt. 25. 31. upon the clouds of heaven in power and great glory; and, When the Son of man shall
 16. 27. come in his glory, and all the Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of
 2 Thes. 1. 17. his glory, saith our Lord himself somewhat more explicitly; but S. Paul with
 1 Thes. 4. 16. most punctuality describeth the manner of his appearance: The Lord, saith he,
 1 Cor. 15. 52. shall descend from heaven with a shout (*ἐν κράτει*, with an exciting or commanding summons) with the voice of an Arch-angel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. In such manner to the purpose of exciting due respect and dread within us, is our Lord represented at the end of the world to come down from Heaven, for the exercising this judgment.

III. I proceed to the last particular observed in the Text, which is the objects, or the extent of the judgment ordained; whom is our Lord ordained to judge? how many shall they be? it is resolved, all without exception, expressed here by the words *quick and dead*; and otherwhere by S. Paul, *I charge thee*, saith he to
 2 Tim. 4. 1. } Timothy, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead
 Rom. 14. 9. } at his appearing and his Kingdom; and by S. Peter likewise; Who (saith he concerning prophane men) shall render an account to him that is ready to judge both the quick and dead. Which places evidently do confirm the truth of the proposition, that all men are obnoxious, and shall be subjected to this judgment; but yet so that the words themselves, *quick and dead*, may seem to need some explication: for it being a common law, to which all men by nature, such as it now stands after the curse, are subject to undergo death; for thence *It is*, as the Apostle saith, appointed for men once to die, and after death judgment; and, what man is he, saith
 Heb. 9. 27. the Psalmist, that shall not see death? and that being so, why should not the dead
 Psal. 89. 48. comprehend all that are to be judged? accordingly as we see it expressed in the Revelation; I saw the dead great and small, standing before God — and the dead were judged for the things written in the Books, according to their works: the dead were judged, no mention is made of the living; wherefore to evade this objection, some have interpreted the dead and living not for a distinction of persons, but of parts in men, of the living souls and dead bodies of men; others have taken the words as signifying metaphorically the living, that is, righteous men, say they, or persons endued with a spiritual life; and the dead, that is, persons dead in trespasses and sins; or void of spiritual sense and activity. But the difficulty is not so mighty as to force us upon so remote and absonous interpretations, S. Paul having plainly enough shewed us how to understand his words, and how to solve the knot propounded; that by the living are to be understood those, who shall be found as it were surprized alive at our Lord's coming; by the dead all other persons, who from the beginning before that time had deceased, and should be raised up at the sound of the last trump: This we say to you (saith he to the Thessalonians) in the word of the Lord, that we which live, remaining at the presence of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. Our Lord is therefore supposed by the Apostle to find some alive at his coming, wherefore that which is affirmed concerning all men being appointed to taste death (being otherwise, as the instances of Enoch and Elias shew, liable to exception) is to be understood by a *Synecdoche* very ordinary in such cases, for the incomparably greater part of men, for all indeed but one generation; or with this abatement, all but those, whose death shall be prevented by our Lord's appearance (the which is set out as very sudden and unexpected, like the coming of a thief in the night) even those men also being in nature and condition mortal like others, although accidentally thus escaping the actual stroke of death. Neither shall even those persons be so exempted from death, but that they must undergo somewhat equivalent thereto; a change, which shall render them alike prepared for judgment with those who had undergone death; for, Behold, saith S. Paul again to the Corinthians, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye: which words alone do with sufficient evidence declare the meaning of this distinction between *quick and dead*. The sum is, that all persons, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what sex, or what age soever, shall be exposed to the judgment; high and low, rich and poor, wise and simple, learned and ignorant, good and bad; the mightiest Princes and Lords no less than the meanest Subjects and Slaves; the subtlest Statesmen and deepest Scholars no less

less than the filliest Idiots; in a word, most universally *All* without any distinction, any privilege, any acceptance of Persons, all and every one must certainly appear at this bar, must undergo this trial, must here receive their sentence and doom, must undergo reward, or punishment accordingly.

IV. The doctrinal part I have thus gone through of this grand point, it remaineth to make some application thereof. The considering it is indeed most necessary, and exceedingly profitable in many respects: there is no kind of virtue or good practice, which the serious consideration thereof is not apt to produce; no good affection, which it may not serve to excite; no good duty to which it doth not powerfully engage us; there is likewise no ill passion, which it may not help to quell or repress; no bad design or action, which it may not effectually deter or discourage us from. Of so many particular uses I shall only touch those, which are most obvious; especially those unto which the Scripture doth expressly apply the consideration thereof.

1. It greatly doth engage us to be very circumspect in all our conversation, and vigilant over our ways; for since by irreverfible decree it is appointed, that we must render an account of every thought arising in our mind (at least of those which find harbour and entertainment there) of every word that passeth through our mouth, of every action which we do undertake, what exceeding reason have we with most attentive, and accurate regard to mind whatever we do? Since it is certain that for all these things we shall be judged, but uncertain to us when we shall be called thereto; how watchful are we concerned to be, that we be not surprised, and found unready to yield a good account? How observant in all reason should we be of our Lord's admonition in the Gospel; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour when the Son of man cometh*? How affected should we be with that warning, or menace in the Revelation; *If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know when I come upon thee*? It may be, as we see intimated, the next day, for all we can know, or the next hour, when death seizing on us shall carry us into that prison or place of durance, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar; and what an unexpressible misery then will it be to be found unprepared for the trial, and unable to render a good account? If we be quite asleep in a total neglect of our duty, or if we be drowsy in a careless and sluggish performance thereof, or if our senses rest amused upon other cares and businesses impertinent to this account, in what an extreme danger do we abide? as our Saviour again doth warn, advising thus, *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares*. You know what the fortune was of the foolish Virgins, whose lamps were gone out for want of oil; that is, whose Souls were destitute of true goodness, and whose lives consequently did not shine with good works; how being surprized in that case by the Bridegroom's coming, they were unfit to meet him, they were excluded from his favour, they were rejected with an, *I know you not*. The like fate you know of that bad servant, who saying in his heart, *my Lord delayeth to come*, (that is not believing, or not considering his state in relation to the future judgment) began to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken (that is, did live in the practice of injustice, uncharitableness, and intemperance) his fate shall be this; *The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not ware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites*: the same, if we do live in gross neglect, or in heinous violation of our duty, will be our doom; Let therefore (as our Lord again doth enjoin, and inculcate) *our loins be girded about, and our lamps burning; and we our selves like men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh, we may open unto him immediately*. Let us, as S. Peter exhorteth, *gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that (in case of our faithful and constant obedience) shall be brought unto us, at the Revelation of Jesus Christ*. In fine, considering these things, *What manner of persons then ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto the coming of our Lord*? as that great Apostle doth again admonish and argue.

2. The consideration of this point is the most effectual means possible to beget, and preserve sincerity in us; disposing us to live simply without dissimulation or deceit,

deceit, speaking as we think, doing what we profess, performing what we promise, being as we seem : for seeing our hearts must be thorowly searched and sifted ; since our most retired thoughts must be disclosed ; since our most secret designs, and our desires must come to light, and be exposed to the publick view of Angels and men ; since the day approacheth, when (all vizards being taken off, all varnish of pretence being wiped away) every person shall appear stark naked in his own true shape and colours ; every thing shall seem what it really is, devested of false glosses, what profit can it be now to dissemble, to conceal, or to disguise our thoughts or doings ? To what purpose doth it serve to palliate our ambitious or covetous intents with a specious garb of zeal or conscience ? what comfort can we find in driving on our self-interests, or satisfying our private resentments, in disturbing the peace of mankind, or fomenting stirs and factions in the world under such masks ? what a folly is it to delude men with false appearances, or rather by them to abuse themselves ; seeing they soon will be rightly informed, and we grievously disgraced for it ? What other satisfaction indeed can we have, than in real goodness, and pure integrity in heart and life ; whereby we may now approve our consciences unto God, and shall afterward by his unquestionable judgment be approved to all the world ? Our true wisdom is

Phil. 1. 10.

to be *εὐμενὴς καὶ ἀπερίσπαστος* (as S. Paul speaketh, that is) *simple and inoffensive toward the day of Christ* ; that is, without any indirect regard or design conscionably to perform our duty toward God and man, in order to the rendring a good account

2 Cor. 1. 10.

at the last judgment : our best comfort will prove that of S. Paul — *the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world.*

3. The consideration of this point should render us very sober and serious in all our thoughts, our opinions, our affections, our actions ; suppressing all proud and haughty conceits, all admiration of these transitory things, all vicious excesses, all vain curiosities, all wanton joys, and satisfactions : For,

Why should any apprehension of worldly state, of wealth, of honour, of wit, of any natural or acquired endowment puff up our minds, seeing the day is near

Ὅτι πλείον, ἢ πένες, ἢ δυνάμεις, ἢ ἀδυναμίαι, ἢ σοφοί, ἢ ἄσοφοι, ἢ δόξα, ἢ ἐλευθερία, ἢ δούλεια παύσονται ἀλλὰ ὅτι μετὰ τὴν ἐξέτασιν ἔσται μὴν. Chryl. in Mat. 17. 9.

at hand, which in these regards will quite level men, and set them all upon even ground before an impartial bar, where no such things shall be had in any consideration or regard ; when all secular and external advantages being laid aside, the moral qualities of men only shall be taxed and estimated ; a day wherein all these admired vanities

shall vanish into nothing ; all our empty tumours shall be depressed ; all the fond arrogance of man shall be confounded ; so that the proud and profane ones of the world shall be constrained to say after the Wise Man, *What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our wanting brought us ? all these things are passed away as a shadow, and as a post that basted by.*

Sap. 3. 3.

And why should we much value those splendid toys, or that fordid trash, which men here do so eagerly scrape, and scramble, and scuffle for ; which then evidently will be discountenanced, will at least appear worthless and unprofitable to us ? what indeed in this world, supposing this judgment, being truly rated, can seem great, or worthy to affect us ?

And why having affairs on foot of so immensely vast importance, should we amuse our selves with trivial matters, impertinent at least, if not prejudicial to our main accounts ?

And how shall we dare to embrace the serpent of sinful excess, considering beside the poison in its body what a dreadful sting it carrieth in the tail thereof ; how these flashes of pleasure do kindle a flame, that will scorch us to eternity ? One thought of judgment mixt with any brutish enjoyments were enough, one would think, to allay their sweetness, to render them indeed not only insipid, but distastful and bitter to us.

And how can we be easily transported into wild merriments, suffering our minds to be ruffled, and the tone of our reason to be slackened by them, if we consider how infinitely serious business lieth upon us ; what a dismal hazard we stand in, how nearly our everlasting welfare lieth at stake ? If here in this world we were bound in few days to undergo a trial concerning our life, all our estate, and all our reputation, we should deem it seasonable to be somewhat intent, to be

be indeed very solicitous about what we should plead, and how we should get off, rather than to be lightly sporting at, and loosening our minds in little pleasant humours; much more rather than to be loosing our minds, and banishing all sober thoughts away in exorbitant frolics; extremely wild or stupid would he seem, who in such a case should so behave himself: it is plainly the case of us all, in a degree infinitely more high than we can suppose any other to be; wherefore reflecting thereon should methinks quash all extravagant and dissolute mirth, apt to beat out of our minds and hearts the care of our Souls; should compose our minds into a very serious frame, should presently drive us into, and constantly hold us in a sober sadness of heart; it is a duty which both in wisdom and piety we do owe to this great matter (*the terror of the Lord*, as *S. Paul* calleth ^{2 Cor. 5. 11.} it) to fear and dread it; with which disposition of spirit excessive transports of carnal joy are scarce consistent: however let us hear (let us I say whose spirits are high, and fancies strong, hear) what the great observer of the world, the *Preacher* doth admonish: *Rejoyce* (saith he) *O young man, in thy youth, and let* ^{Eccles. 11. 9} *thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.*

4. The consideration of this point should engage us carefully to improve all the talents by God's providence and grace committed to us; that is, all the means and abilities, all the advantages and opportunities afforded us of doing good, or serving God. Hath God bestowed wealth upon us? this will engage us so to use it, as not therewith to cherish our pride, or pamper our luxury, not merely to gratify our pleasure or humour; but to expend it in succouring our indigent neighbour, or otherwise promoting God's service. Hath God invested us with power? this should induce us to use it moderately and fruitfully, not therewith to domineer or insult over our brethren, not any-wise to wrong or misuse them; but to yield protection, aid, and comfort to them; to afford patronage and succour to right; to minister encouragement, support and defence to virtue; *remembering that we have also a Lord in heaven*, and a Judge, to whom we must be ^{Eph. 6. 9.} accountable. Hath God vouchsafed us any parts, any wit, any knowledge? this should move us to employ them not so much in contriving projects to advance our own petty interests, or in procuring vain commendation to our selves, as in setting forth God's praise, in recommending goodness, in drawing men with the most advantage we can to the practice of virtue and piety. Hath God conferred on us any thing of honour, or credit among men? this may oblige us not to build high conceits upon it, or to find vain complacencies therein, but to use it as an instrument of bringing honour to God, of ministering aid or countenance to the interests of piety; to those purposes, I say, this consideration greatly serveth; for that it is plainly declared that we are but Stewards of these things, having received them in trust, not to use them according to our pleasure, but to employ them with the best advantage for God's service; and accordingly shall in ^{Matt. 25. 14.} the last judgment be strictly accountable for them; so that if we have embezzled or perverted them to abuse, it will then appear far worse for us, than if we never had received them; much better indeed it will be for us, that we had been the poorest beggars, fillicst ideots, most despicable wretches here, than not to have duly improved our wealth, parts and honour to God's service; *To whomsoever* ^{Luke 12. 48.} *much is given, from him much shall be required,* is the rule that punctually in that great Audit will be observed.

5. The consideration of this point may induce us to the observing strict justice and equity in all our dealings: there are in this world many advantages of doing injury and iniquity safely in respect to men, without intrenching upon humane laws, without incurring any check, or any correction from them; they reach to very few cases, they retrench only some great outrages, and punish some enormous crimes, apparently noxious to the peace or welfare of common Society; the stroke of humane law may also (even where it taketh cognizance, where it maketh provision to secure right, or repair wrong) often be evaded by power, or eluded by slight, by gift, by favour: But as the divine law doth extend universally to the prohibition of all iniquity whatever (small as well as great, secret no less than visible) so the divine judgment inevitably will reach to all; the least

*Quam angusta innocentia est ad legem
bonum esse: quanto latius officiorum patet,
quam juris regula? Sen. de Ir. 2. 27.*

wrongful word, by which we hurt the good name of our neighbour, the least exaction or hard dealing with him, the least over-reaching him by craft (however blameless these things may seem here, however they may pass with commendation, as instances of wit or ability) will surely then be condemned and punished:

1 Thef. 4. 6. *Let no man, saith S. Paul, go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, δὲν ἑν-
δύο ὁ ἕλεος αὐτοῦ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, because God will judge and avenge for all these things;*

2 Cor. 6. 9. *so that (as the same Apostle teacheth us) the unjust, the wrongful, the revilers, the rapacious shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; that day will detect all wicked fraud and cozenage, will defeat all unjust might and oppression; no power shall be able to break through, no wit shall skill to decline, no friendship or favour will help to keep off the impartial sentence, and the irresistible stroke of that judgment; There is no darkness or shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves from being detected, from being prosecuted and punished.*

Job 34. 22. *The poor, the meek, the simple, who rather chuse to suffer than do wrong, shall there find a certain patronage, and a full redress; that strict abstinence from wrong, which here may pass for simplicity, shall then be approved for the best wisdom; and this over-reaching craft, which now men are so conceited of, will then appear wretched folly, when all ill gotten profits with shameful regret shall in effect be refunded, yea shall bring grievous damages and sore penalties for them: In fine, then it will be most evident, that he who injureth another, doth indeed chiefly hurt himself; he that cheateth his neighbour, doth really gull himself, and abuse his own soul.*

6. The consideration of this point is apt to breed Charity in us; Charity of all sorts; Charity in giving, Charity in forgiving, Charity in judging and censuring of men.

1. It should incline us freely to impart our goods, and to contribute our endeavours for the relief of our poor neighbour; for that the last judgment will in especial manner proceed upon a regard to the performance, or the neglect of this duty; it shall be the Test of Piety, and a ground of recompence at the last day. To

Matt. 25. 34. *Lord himself telleth us, that he will say, Because I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me; therefore, Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: to them, who contrarily had neglected to succour, and comfort their poor brethren, he will pronounce the contrary doom; Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat, &c. and what argument can there be imagined more forcible to engage us on the practice of this duty?*

2. It should likewise dispose us readily to forgive all injuries, and discourtesies received from any man; for since we shall at that trial need abundance of favour and mercy from God, we should in all reason and duty be willing to shew the like to others for God's sake, and at his command; especially since he hath appointed the doing so for an indispensable condition, without which we shall not receive mercy, or pardon from him; so that infallibly, if we will be rigorous and hard to others in this case, we must expect the like extremity and severity from God; for the laws and rules of God's proceeding then are these: *He shall*

Jam. 2. 13. *have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; If ye forgive not men*

Matt. 6. 15. *their trespasses, neither will God forgive you your trespasses: And by a lively example, in way of history or parable, our Lord in the Gospel hath expressed, what words (in case of our refusing to remit to our neighbour his debts and trespasses*

Matt. 18. 32. *against us) we shall hear, what usage we shall find at that day; O thou wicked servant (will God say to any such unmerciful person of us) I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me, shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And the Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that is due unto him.*

3. It likewise serveth to restrain us from all undue, all rash and harsh censure concerning the persons, the actions, the state of our neighbour; whereby we do invade our Lord's office, making our selves Judges in his room; whereby we usurp his right, exercising jurisdiction over his Subjects; whereby we arrogate to our selves his Attributes, who alone is able to know, and judge rightly; *Why, saith*

S. Paul,

S. Paul, dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? *We* Rom. 14. 20. shall all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ. It is the office of Christ, which we Rom. 14. 4. must not encroach upon; and, *Who art thou* (doth he again expostulate) *that judgest anothers servant?* to his own Master he standeth or falleth; we wrong our Lord, in assuming authority over his servants; we wrong our brethren, in making our selves their masters; and, *judge nothing before the time*, saith the same Apostle, *until the Lord come, who shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of hearts.* We blind wretches in effect do make our selves Gods, and sacrilegiously asserit his incommunicable perfections to our selves, when we presume to search the hearts, or pretend to know the secret intentions of our brethren: Again, *There is* (saith another Apostle) *one Lawgiver, who can save or de-* James 4. 12. *stroy; who art thou that judgest another?* that is, how intolerably rash, unjust and arrogant art thou, who seatest thy self upon God's tribunal, and thence dost adventure to pronounce doom upon his people? Did we indeed well consider this Judgment, we should rather think it adviseable to be mindful of our own case, than to pass sentence upon that of others; observing how liable our selves are, we should scarce have the heart to carp at others; finding what great need our actions will then have of favourable interpretation, we should surely be more candid, and mild in censuring other mens actions; especially considering, that by harsh Judgment of others, we make our own case worse, and enflame our reckoning; we directly thence incur guilt, we aggravate our own offences, and render our selves inexcusable; we expose our selves upon that score to condemnation; for, *With what judgment we judge we shall be judged; and with what mea-* Mat. 7. 2. *sure we mete, it shall be measured to us again*, our Lord doth say: and, *Inexcusable,* Luke 6. 37. *saith S. Paul, thou art O man, whoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judg-* Rom. 2. 1, 3. *est another thou condemnest thy self:* and, *μὴ ἀνέστης κατ' ἀλλήλων*, *Do not* (saith S. James) *grudge* (or make moanful complaint) *against one another, lest you be con-* Jam. 5. 9. *demned; behold the Judge standeth before the doors.*

7. It serves also to support and comfort us as against all other wrongful dealing, so against injuries of this kind; against all unjust and uncharitable censures, groundless slanders and surmises, undeserved scorns and reproaches of men; for that assuredly at that judgment right will be done to him, that suffereth in this kind; his innocence will be cleared, his good name will be vindicated and repaired: *God will bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noon* Psal. 37. 6. *day;* whence approving his conscience to God in well-doing, he may chearfully say with S. Paul, *With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you,* 1 Cor. 4. 3. *or of man's judgment.* If our heart do not condemn us, we may (whatever the opi- 1 John 3. 21. nions or discourses of man be concerning us) have a chearful boldness, and comfortable hope in regard to God: the obloquy of men is a part of that cross, which every good man here is appointed to bear, and assuredly shall meet with; for the Devil and the World do nothing, if they cannot by impudent assaults dash, or by malicious suggestions blast the practice of goodness; but this consideration may easily raise us to bear it with patience, or with resolution to surmount it, it thence appearing, that it no-wise can harm us; for if God is our Judge, what can the fancies or the tattles of men concern us? *I will not fear the judgment of men, who shall have God for my judge*, was with good reason said by S. Hierom.

Καὶ πάντες διηκώμεν, ὃ δὲ δικαιοσύνην ἀποφύγεταί, ἵνα μὴ λόγον ᾖ τῷ ἐκείνῳ, καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἐπαμυνώμεθα καὶ διαμαρτυρώμεθα, ἐκείνῳ δὲ μὴ καταδικάζειν, ἵνα μὴ πάλιν ὁρῶμεν τὸ ἐκείνου κρείσσον.
Chryl. Tom. 8. p. 98.

Non timebo hominum judicium, habiturus judicem Deum. Hier.

8. It upon the like ground should preserve us from being deluded and poisoned by the more favourable opinions of men: there are visibly two great rocks, upon which frequently men do split, and make shipwreck of good conscience, compliance with the practice and regard to the opinions of others; men out of complaisance accompany others in doing ill; it is called good nature, it is deemed good manners to do it, so very civilly and genteely, very nobly and gallantly they go on to perdition, giving up their salvation in complement and courtesy to one another; then 'tis but natural for this most debonair and generous dealing to requite one another with good words at least, or with some demonstrations of esteem; and 'tis no less natural for those

Nil omnino agimus, qui nos per exempla multitudinis defendimus, Et ad consolationem nostram aliena saepe numerantes vitia, deesse nobis dicimus, quos debeamus sequi. Hier.

Qua est hac tanta levitas animi, qua tanta vanitas, relicta propria conscientia, alienam opinionem sequi, Et quidem fidam atque simulatam, rapi vengo falsa laudationis gaudere ad circumventionem suam, Et illusionem pro beneficio accipere? Hier. ad Celantiam.

who are thus flattered to comply with the opinions of others, and to judge of themselves accordingly, thinking themselves good because they are called so; but to keep our selves from being upon such occasions, or upon any the like grounds perniciously cozened, we should consider, that in the great judgment the esteem of men will import nothing of advantage to us: things will pass there as they are in themselves, not

as they are rated here, according to real truth, and intrinsic worth, not according to the conceits or affections of ignorant and partial men; even the things, that appear fairest here, may prove foul there; persons much approved and applauded now, may then be condemned and rejected; for *God seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* God then will search the hearts, and weigh the spirits of men; he will scan their designs and intentions; he will closely examine their tempers, and exactly poise their circumstances; he will consider many things inscrutable to men, upon which the true worth of persons, and real merit of actions do depend; wherefore most vain and unsafe it is to rely upon the uncertain opinions of men; or to please our selves with them; they neither can out of blindness, or will out of passion, interest, partiality judge truly.

9. If we desire to judge reasonably about our selves, or to know our true state, the only way is to compare our hearts and lives with the law of God, judging our selves by that rule, according to which God will judge us; if we find in our hearts the love of God and goodness (sincere, although imperfect) if we perceive our selves disposed to keep God's commandments (to live piously, righteously and soberly in this world) then may we have a satisfactory hope concerning our state;

then we may (as S. John saith) have confidence toward God — because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing to him; but if we do not find that mind in us, and that practice; we in conceiting well of our selves upon any other grounds do but flatter, and impose upon our selves; if all the world should account us good, and take us to be in a good case, we should not at

all believe them, or mind them; for, *Let no man deceive us; he that doth righteousness, he* (and he alone) *is righteous*, is the most faithful advice, and unquestionable sentence of S. John. It is therefore (that by resting on such false bottoms we be not abused, and drawn thence to neglect the amendment of our hearts and ways, in order to our final account) a duty incumbent on us thus to search our hearts and try our ways, and accordingly to judge our selves; the doing which with care and conscience would dispose us to prepare for the judgment we speak of; for *If, saith S. Paul, we would judge our selves, we should not be judged*, or not condemned.

10. The consideration of this point will guard us from infidelity, and from impatience in regard to the providential dispensation of affairs here; considering it, we shall not be offended at passages otherwise unaccountable, and scandalous to providence; we shall not wonder that so many disorders occur in the world, that right is perverted, that fraud and violence do prevail, that vice doth reign: We shall not complain of the adversities incident to good men, nor repine at the prosperities of bad men; we shall not be dissatisfied with any event here befalling our selves or others; since from hence it doth most evidently appear, that all these things are consistent with the wisdom, goodness and justice of God; and do assuredly tend to the declaration of those glorious Attributes; yea that consequently the worst accidents here, if we are faithful to God and to our selves, will finally conduce to our advantage and benefit, according to that of the Apostle, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*

11. In fine, there is no consideration able to promise so much efficacy toward the rousing our passions, or duly ordering and settling them upon religious practice: it especially is apt to set on work those two grand Engines and mighty Springs of activity, hope and fear; and with them to raise their respective companions joy and grief: for how, if we have been very culpable in the transgression or neglect of our duty, can we reflect on this point without being seized with an hideous dread of coming to so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a sentence? how can we think of it without a bitter remorse? hard as rocks surely we must be, if such thoughts do not pierce us; utterly dead and senseless must our hearts

hearts be, if they do not feel the sting of such considerations; more stupid and stony we then are, than the dissolute *Felix*, who could not without affrightment hear a plain discourse concerning the judgment to come; yea more inconsiderate and insensible we appear, than those obstinate sons of darkness, the *Devils* themselves, who believe and tremble thereat. Acts 24. 25. ^{Ευνοῦς} 70. ^{ῥῆδος} James 2. 29.

If on the other hand we are conscious to our selves of having seriously and carefully endeavoured to please God, and obey his commandments, how can we think of it without a comfortable hope of finding mercy and favour in that day? If in our hearts we can say with S. Paul, *I have combated the good combat, I have finished (or I have continued) the race, I have kept the faith*; then may we hopefully say after him, as he said confidently before us, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render unto me.* If by virtue of the saving grace of God, which hath appeared to all men, and according to its holy instructions, we have denied ungodliness, and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously and piously in this present world; then may we joyfully expect the blessed hope, and the appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; then may we indeed heartily wish, cheerfully hope, and earnestly pray for that day; doing which is the character, and hath been the practice of the best men: The Lord, saith S. Paul, *will render the crown of righteousness to all them who love his appearance*; and, *looking for and hastening to the presence of the day of God*, saith S. Peter, intimating the practice of the primitive Christians; and, *Yea come, O Lord Jesus*, is S. John's petition in the close of the Revelation, and may be the prayer of those who have the like conscience and affections with him. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1. 18. Tit. 2. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 1. 7. Phil. 3. 20. Tit. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Apoc. 22. 20.

I conclude, wishing and exhorting, that the meditation of this most important affair may be continually present to our minds; that we may seem with that devout man always to hear the last trump sounding in our ears, and through our hearts; that so with a pious awe, and with a well grounded hope we may expect the coming of our Lord, and may love his appearance; that from hence being effectually restrained from all impious and vicious conversation, being induced to a circumspect and watchful pursuit of all piety and virtue, guiding our lives inoffensively in all good conscience toward God and Man, we may in the end be able to render a good account; and with comfort unexpressible may at that day from the mouth of our Judge hear those happy words, *Well done good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy; Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World*: Unto the possession whereof Almighty God in his infinite mercy by the grace of his Holy Spirit vouchsafe to bring us, through the merits of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. 1 Thess. 5. 23.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

SERMON XXXIV.

The Divinity of the Holy Ghost.

1 Cor. III. 16.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?



My purpose is at this time for our edification in Christian knowledge concerning that grand object of our faith, and Author of our salvation, the *Holy Ghost*; and for arming us against erroneous opinions about him, such as have been vented in former ages, and have been revived in this; to explain briefly the name, nature and original of the Holy Ghost (according to what appears discovered of him in the sacred Writings;) to consider also the peculiar characters, offices and operations, which (according to the mysterious œconomy revealed in the Gospel) are assigned, and attributed to him; so that incidentally by testimonies of Scripture, and arguments deduced thence, I shall assert the principal doctrines received in the Church, in opposition to the most famously Heterodox Dogmatists that have appeared. For the doing which this Text of *S. Paul* doth minister good occasion; for the full explication thereof doth require a clearing of the particulars mentioned, and it self affordeth good arguments against the principal errors about this matter. His being called the Spirit of God may engage us to consider his nature and original; his being said to dwell in us, doth imply his personality; his divinity appears in that Christians are called the Temple of God, because the Holy Ghost dwelleth in them; his sanctifying virtue may be inferred from his constituting us temples, by his presence in us. I shall then in order prosecute the points mentioned; and lastly shall adjoin somewhat of practical application.

1. *First* then for the Name of the Holy Spirit; whereby also his nature and origine are intimated.

Of those things, which do not immediately incur our sight, but do by conspicuous effects discover their existence, there is scarce any thing in substance more pure and subtle, in motion more quick and nimble, in efficacy more strong and powerful, than wind (or spirit.) Hence in common use of most languages the name of wind or spirit doth serve to express those things, which from the subtilty or tenuity of their nature being indiscernable to us, are yet conceived to be moved with great perniciousity, and to be endued with great force: so Naturalists we see are wont to name that which in any body is most abstruse, most agile, and most operative in *Spirit*: Hence it comes that this word is transferr'd to denote those substances, which are free of matter, and removed from sense, but are endued (as with understanding, so) with a very powerful activity, and virtue: Even among the *Pagans* these sort of Beings were called *Spirits*: The souls of men are by them so termed; (*anima* hath its derivation from *ἀνέμω*, wind.) Our life (saith *Cicero*) is

Vita corpore, & spiritu continetur.
Cic. Or. pro Mar.

Eodem tempore suscipimur in lucem, & hoc celesti spiritu augemur. De Arusp. resp.

Stoicos allego, qui spiritum dicunt animam, penè nobiscum. Tert. de Anim. 5.

contained by (or comprized in) body and Spirit: And, *We* (saith he again) *are at the same time received into the light, and endued with this heavenly spirit* (that is, with our soul.) Particularly the *Stoicks* used to apply this name to our soul: *I alledge the Stoicks* (saith *Tertullian*) *who call the soul a spirit, almost therein agreeing with us Christians.* They likewise frequently did attribute this appellation to God:

— *Cælm*

—Cælum & terrarum camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum terræ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus agit —

Æn. 6.

said the Prince of their Poets; by the word *Spirit* understanding (as *Lactantius* *Lact.* 1. 5. and *Macrobius* do interpret him) God himself, that pierceth and acteth all things; yea he so otherwhere expoundeth his own mind, when he to the same purpose sings,

—Deum ire per omnes
Terrasque tractusque maris, cælumque profundum.

Georg. 4.

And the Orator, in his *Dialogues*, maketh *Balbus* to speak thus: *These things truly could not, all the parts of the world so conspiring together, be so performed, if they were not contained (or kept together) by one divine and continued Spirit: and Seneca* clearly; God (saith he) *is nigh to thee, he is with thee, he is in thee: I tell thee (O Lucilius) a Holy Spirit resideth within us, an observer and guardian of our good and our bad things (or doings) who as he hath been dealt with by us, so he dealeth with us; there is no good man (or no man is good) without God: and, Zeno defined God thus; God is a Spirit, passing through the whole world: Posidonius also more largely; God is an intellectual and fiery Spirit, not having shape; but changing into what things he will, and assimilated to all things.*

Hac ita fieri omnibus inter se continen-
tibus mundi partibus profecto non possent,
nisi ea uno, & divino continuato spiritu
continerentur. De Nat. D. II. p. 60.

Prope est à te Deus, tecum est, intus est;
ita dico, Lucili, sacer intra nos spiritus
sedet, malorumque bonorumque nostrorum
observator, & hic prout à nobis tractatus
est, ita nos ipse tractat; bonus vir sine
Deo non est. Sen. Ep. 41.

Θεός ἐστι πνεῦμα, διήκων δι' ὅλην τὴν
κτίσιν. Zeno.

Θεός ἐστι πνεῦμα νοερόν, καὶ πυρῶδες,
καὶ ἔχει μορφήν, μεταβάλλον δὲ εἰς ὅ
βούληται, καὶ ἐξομοιωθεὶς παντί. Posid.
apud Stob.

In like manner hence the Holy Scriptures with regard to our capacity and manner of conceiving, do with the same appellation adumbrate all those kind of substances, void of corporeal bulk and concretion; human Souls, all the angelical Natures, and the incomprehensible Deity it self. And to God indeed this name is attributed, to signify his most simple nature, and his most powerful energy; but to other substances of this kind it seemeth also assigned to imply the manner of their origin; because God did by a kind of spiration produce them; for which cause likewise (at least in part) we may suppose, that the Holy Scripture doth more signally and in a peculiar manner assign that name to one Being, that most excellent Being, which is the subject of our present discourse; the which is called the Spirit of God (that is of God the Father, who by reason of his priority of nature is often called God in a personal signification) the good Spirit of God; the Spirit of Christ; the Holy Spirit; and often absolutely in way of excellence, the Spirit.

The same is also called the Power or Virtue of God; about the reason of which appellation we may briefly observe, that whereas in every intellectual being there are conceived to be three principal faculties, will, understanding, efficacy; and correspondent to these three perfections, Goodness, Wisdom, Power; a certain one of these (according to that mystical œconomy or husbandry of Notions, whereby the manner and order of subsisting and operation, proper to each person in the blessed Trinity, is insinuated) is in a certain manner appropriated to each person (so I now by anticipation speak, being to warrant these terms hereafter) namely to the Father it is ascribed, that he freely decreeth what things should be done; to the Son, that he disposeth them in a most wise method and order toward their effecting; to the Holy Ghost, that he with a powerful force doth execute and effect them: whence as God is said, according to his pleasure, to decree and determine things [and *τὸ θέλημα*, the will, is a name by some Writers assigned to him; particularly *Ignatius* doth in his Epistles frequently so stile him; and so *S. Paul* may be understood, where he saith: *καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα*, And thou knowest the will; that is, knowest God the Father; and *S. Peter*, For it is better, that ye (εἰ θέλει τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ) if the will of God pleaseth, do suffer for well doing, than for evil doing] as the Son is called the wisdom of God, so the Holy Spirit is named the power of God; his substantial-power, as we shall shew. To this Being, what-
ever it is, 'tis manifest that properly and primarily the name of Holy Spirit is ap-
propriated; but (which we should consider) from thence (as is usual in other cases and matters) by figurative deflection of speech (or by metonymy) the manner of that operation which that Holy Spirit doth exert, his influence and efficacy,
and

Rom. 2. 18.

1 Pet. 3. 17.

Luke 1. 35.

24. 49.

and also any sort of effects proceeding from him, do commonly assume, or partake of this name. So when from this Spirit, in a very conspicuous manner, an excellent virtue of performing miraculous works, was liberally imparted to the Apostles, that virtue (or the manifest communication thereof, *the manifestation of the Spirit*, as S. Paul calleth it) is named the Holy Ghost: as when in S. John's Gospel it is said, *The Holy Spirit was not yet*; that is, the Apostles had not yet received that excellent Gift; or that marvellous efficacy of the Holy Spirit had not yet discovered it self in them; as also when in the Acts some Disciples are said *not to have heard whether there were any Holy Spirit*; that is, they were not acquainted concerning that peculiar efficacy thereof. When also there are mentioned the Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom (which sort of Spirits are said to be encreased, to be taken away, to be quenched) it is plain, that by those phrases not the Holy Spirit of God it self (which in no sense is liable to such accident) but gifts, fruits or effects thereof are denoted; some of which sometimes are in the plural number called *πνεύματα*, Spirits; as when S. Paul enjoine the *Corinthians* to be *Zealous* (or earnestly desirous) of *Spirits*, that is of spiritual gifts, or graces, or revelations; and when *the discerning of Spirits* (that is, of divine revelations, true or counterfeit) is said to be granted to some; and where *the Spirits of Prophets* are said to be subject or subordinate to *Prophets* (that is, one Prophet had a right, and ability to judge about the revelations made to another, or pretended to be so) but these, and the like figurative senses being excluded, we discourse about the Holy Spirit in its most proper and primary sense, as it is in and from God.

Which things being premised concerning the Name of the Holy Spirit; for explication of his Nature,

I. We do first assert, that it is a being in some sense truly distinct from the Father and the Son; hereby rejecting the opinion of *Sabellius*, *Noetus*, *Hermogenes*

Ὁς μὴτε τὸν Σαβέλλιον νότον καὶ ἡρμώγιον ἀθεῖν. οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲν τῶν ἰδιωτικῶν ἀναμειβόμενον. *Patres Conc. Constant. Epist. ad Conc. Rom. Theod.* 5. 9.

and *Praxeas*; which confounding the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and destroying their substantial properties, did of them all make but one person, under several names; affirming *in one person three appellations*, and making *the Trinity to be a coincidence*, as

Epiphanius speaks. [I said, truly distinct; for this word *distinction* is by the Schoolmen conceived more commodiously applied to this mystery, than others of near signification; those of diversity and difference seeming to intimate somewhat pre-

In divinis vitare debemus nomen diversitatis, Et differentia, possumus autem uti nomine distinctionis, propter oppositionem relativam. Thom.

Διδακτα τῶν ἁγίων ἐστὶν ὡς μὴ. μὴδὲ δὲ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ προσκυνούμενῳ, ἀλλὰ ὡς ἐν τῇ διακρίσει. καὶ τῇ ἑνότητι. Naz. Or. 23.

Apud Aug. persona saepe diversa dicuntur.

judicial to the unity of essence; *In divinis* (in the mystery of the Trinity) *we must*, saith *Aquinas*, *avoid the name of diversity, and of difference, but we may use the name of distinction, because of the relative opposition*: which caution yet the ancient Fathers do not so precisely observe; for sometimes in them *περὶ τὴν ἑνότητα* and *διακρίσει* (the diversity and difference of the persons) sometimes also the word *διαίρεσις*, the division of them do occur; although they seem more willingly to use the word *διακρίσει*, distinction; that which we simply affirm

is, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost *τῶν ἰδιωτικῶν διακρίνεται*, are distinguished in properties (as *Greg. Nyssen* speaks) are *ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος*, (as *Greg. Naz.* says) that is, truly more than in mere name or conception distinguished by their properties and relations.]

The Holy Ghost is, I say, truly distinct from the Father, and the Son; this we shall first shew separately, then jointly in regard to both.

He is distinguished from the Father; for,

1. He is called the *Spirit of the Father*; which relation surely is not devised by fancy, or wants a real foundation; and therefore its terms are truly distinct.

2. The Holy Spirit is said *ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς* that is to go out; or proceed from the Father; he is therefore another from him; for a thing cannot be deemed really to proceed from another, from which it only is distinguished in name or conceit.

3. It is also said to be sent, conferr'd, given by the Father; which surely argueth some kind of true distinction.

4. Divers things are attributed to the Spirit, which do not well agree to the Father; as particularly that he appeared *ἐν ὁμοιότητι* in a bodily form; that he descended, and rested upon our Lord, the Baptist beholding him, *I saw* (saith S. John) *the Spirit descending as a Dove, and it abode on him*.

But,

But, God the Father, no man (saith S. John) ever saw; nor (addeth S. Paul) can any man see him. 5. The Holy Spirit is our advocate with God, crying in our hearts, and interceding with the Father for us (*ὑπομαρτυροῦν*, saith S. Paul) that office, that act does manifestly suppose a true distinction.

For like reasons he is also distinguished from the Son; for, 1. He is called the Spirit of the Son; and that relation implies a real ground. 2. He is sent by the Son; *ἔμψυχον ἀποστείλας*. Behold (saith our Lord) I send him: And, If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 3. He descended upon Christ, and abode on him; he filled him, he led or acted him; he anointed him; by his operation Christ did assume flesh; wherefore he is distinguished from the Son. 4. Christ plainly distinguishes between speaking against the Son, and blaspheming against the Holy Ghost; which supposes them two objects.

5. The Holy Ghost is said to receive from the Son that which he should tell to Christ's Disciples, and thence to glorify the Son. 6. The Son did, and suffered many things personally, which cannot agree, and cannot be attributed to the Holy Ghost, as that he was incarnated, and assumed man's nature; that he suffered, rose again, ascended into heaven. 7. He is expressly said to be distinct from the Son: I (saith he) will ask the Father, and he will give you another comforter. So

separately may the Holy Spirit be shewed distinct from each; and jointly in several places that distinction is signified. For to those three, by a constant economy, a certain order is assigned, some proper offices, and peculiar energies are ascribed; which it is not reasonable to think done without a real foundation; By Christ (saith S. Paul) we have an access in one Spirit to the Father. Why must we proceed by this circuit, in this certain method, if the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are only distinguished in name? Wherefore also doth the same Apostle bless thus:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. To what end also doth he distinctively assign a peculiar dispensation of operations to the Father, of ministeries to the Son, of gifts to the Holy Ghost? wherefore likewise doth S. Peter ascribe our election to the Father predestinating, to the Son propitiating, to the Holy Ghost sanctifying? Doth it agree to the gravity, simplicity and sincerity of the divine Oracles, so in a perpetual tenour to propound those three, as three, divers not only in names, but in reality, in manner of being, in manner of operation, if there be no other under all but a nominal, or notional distinction? what would this be but not only to yield us an occasion, but to impose a necessity of erring? shall we think those principal masters of truth purposely argute, perplexed and obscure in their speech?

Farthermore, S. John affirms in his first Epistle (at least if there the text be authentic) that there are three which bare witness in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the which also undoubtedly (although not so conjoinedly, as in his Epistle) he assures in his Gospel; for, I am he, saith Christ, who bear witness of my self, and the Father, which sent me, beareth witness of me; and, when the comforter shall come, he will bear witness of me: so there are, we see, three witnesses, which our Lord appealeth to; but three names (as for instance, Marcus, Tullius, Cicero) or the same thing having three names, will not constitute three witnesses.

In fine, the form of Baptism evinceth this distinction; for at our Baptism we profess to acknowledge the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; we perform worship, and promise obedience to them all; which doing Sabellius would have us do, as if subjects should be required to oblige their Faith to Caius, Julius, and Caesar; which kind of proceeding it seems absurd to suppose, that God should solemnly institute. This may be sufficient to overthrow the Sabellian error.

II. Again, we affirm the Holy Spirit to be a person. By a person we understand a singular, subsistent, intellectual being; or (as Boethius defines it) an individual substance of a rational nature. The Greek Writers use the word *ὑπόστασις* (which word being of wider signification, doth comprehend also things void of understanding, importing) substance, concretely taken, or a thing subsistent (*ὑποκείμενον*) which term is extant in the Scripture, where the Son of God in respect to his Father is called *ὑπόστασις* (the character of his substance or person) whence there was less cause that S. Hieron and other Latin ancient Writers should so avoid, or timidly admit the word *hypostasis*; as fearing that by use thereof they should seem to acknowledge three essences; seeing (as S. Austin notes) according to most common acception substance denoted the same with

Unde non ar-
dennus dicere
unam essenti-
am, tres sub-
stantias, sed
unam essenti-
am (vel sub-
stantiam) tres
personas.
Naz. Orat.
39. 32.

essence; whence, saith he, we dare not say one essence, three substances; but one ef-
fence (or substance) three persons; but this (as Gregory Nazianzen did consider)
was nothing else, but *ἐπὶ λέξεσιν ὑπομαχῆν*; to contest about syllables; or *ἐπὶ ᾠδαῖς*
μικρολογεῖν, to mince about sounds; seeing whether we call it person or subsistence,
we mean the same thing. We however affirming the Holy Spirit to be a person,
do thereby intend to exclude the opinion of Socinus and his followers, which af-
ferts the Holy Spirit to be only an accident, or an accidental thing; to wit, a di-
vine power, virtue or efficacy, resident in God, or derived from him.

1. Now this we perswade first from those things, which we before did shew con-
cerning the distinction of the Father and the Holy Spirit; for that slender (or ra-
ther no) distinction, such as may be conceived to be between any being and its
efficacy (especially in this case, attending to the most simple nature of God, and
his most simple manner of acting) doth not well reach the business, nor doth suf-
fice to found that distinction, which the Scripture doth (as we shewed) constitute
between the Father and Holy Spirit. Indeed Socinus as to this point (however it
be, that he sometimes objecteth Sabellianism to the Catholics) doth scarce himself
differ from Sabellius: for Sabellius himself did avow the Son and Holy Spirit to be
divers energies of the Father, and that they are distinguished from him as Light
and Heat from the Sun, which did not hinder the Fathers from refuting him, as
putting no true distinction between them; as indeed God in the thing it self (or
beyond the manner of our conception and expression) is not distinguished from
his power and efficacy.

2. Again, this may be collected from the very name of Spirit, the which pri-
marily is imposed upon substances, both corporeal and incorporeal; belonging to
God essentially understood, to Angels, to human Souls, all which things are sub-
stances: whence it is probable, that to the Being, of which we treat, because it in
like manner is a substance, this name of Spirit is assigned by God, the best Author
of words; the epithet Holy being adjoined for distinction sake. This is confirm-
ed from that whereas God is essentially *a Spirit* (as is expressed in S. John's Gos-
pel) his efficacy cannot aptly assume the same name; as because our Soul is essen-
tially a Spirit, it were incongruous to call any virtue thereof a Spirit. The same
is farther hence confirmed, for that the evil Spirit, which is opposed to the good
Spirit of God, is not an efficacy of God, but a subsistent Being; which argueth
the good Spirit also to be likewise subsistent. The same is corroborated from the
Apostle's comparing the Spirit of God to that Spirit, which being in man doth
search and discern his inward counsels and purposes; but the Spirit of man is a
substantial thing; wherefore 'tis intimated, that correspondently the Spirit of
God is such a Being. We add to these things, that power, virtue, efficacy are
ascribed to the Holy Spirit; that you may (saith S. Paul) abound in hope by the pow-
er of the Holy Ghost; but that power should be attributed unto power, or efficacy
to efficacy, is not congruous.

3. The Holy Scripture (to whose speech it becometh us to sute our conceptions)
doth commonly describe the Holy Spirit as a person, enjoying personal titles, of-
fices, attributes, and operations; and those such which neither in sound or sense
do agree to mere efficacy.

1. Speaking of the Holy Ghost, it purposely and carefully (as it were) doth
accommodate the article agreeing to a person: Not it but he is the article com-
monly assigned to the Spirit; and that with marks of doing it studiously: *ὁ κς*
John 16. 13. *ὁ κς* *πνεῦμα & ἀληθεία*, when he (in the masculine gender) comes, the spirit of
14. 26. 15. 2. *truth* (in the neuter) 'tis said in S. John's Gospel: and *ὁ κς* *πνεῦμα* *ἀληθείας* (none,
6. in the masculine gender again, knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God)
1 Cor. 2. 11. why, otherwise beside analogy of Grammar, should the stile be so tempered or
inflected, but to insinuate the Holy Spirit's personality? If he were nothing else
but the virtue of God, there were no need, or rather it would be inconvenient,
so to phrase it.

2. Again, the Scripture attributes personal offices to the Holy Spirit; the office
John 14. 16. of a Master (He shall teach you) of a Leader, or Guide (He shall lead you in-
John 16. 13. to all truth) of a Monitor (He shall bring all things to your remembrance) of a
John 15. 26. Witness (He shall testify concerning me) yea, which more strongly evinceth, of a
Legate, who declareth God's mind, not as from himself, but as deputed and fur-
nished with Instructions from the Father and the Son: He shall not (tis said)
speak

Speak from himself; but whatever things he shall hear, he shall speak; and he will tell you things to come: All things that the Father hath, are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you: Which expressions do in no sort well agree to the divine power, or efficacy, but evidently respect a person; for what is performed by any agent, to say that of its efficacy, as distinct from it, is beside the reason and manner of Speech; and doth especially disagree with the nature and genius of the divine Scripture, which undertaketh most simply and plainly to instruct us. That God's efficacy should be sent from the Father and Son; that it should speak, that it should hear from the Father and the Son, how strangely hard and obscure a manner of speaking is that? from them, not from himself: what *himself* can they imagine, who distinguish him not from God, and allow him no personality? why should we without necessity asperse the Holy Scripture, made clearly to instruct us, with such mistyness and darkness? Likewise to the Holy Spirit is attributed the office of a Paraclete, or advocate, who pleadeth our cause with God, praying and interceding with God for us: but that God's efficacy (which can hardly be conceived, which should not be conceived distinct from God) should speak to God, should interpose it self between us, is, as the rest, too perplex'd and intricate a saying.

3. Farthermore, the Holy Scripture doth to the Holy Spirit attribute faculties and operations annexed to him plainly personal: such are Understanding (*the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God: The things of God none knoweth, but the Spirit of God*) Will (*He divideth to every one as he willeth*) Affecti-
1 Cor. 2. 10.
11.
2 Cor. 12. 11.
John 3. 8.
Eph. 4. 30.
1st. 63. 10.
John 16. 13.
Matt. 10. 20.
Acts 13. 2.
2d. 10. 19.
ons, of Grief (*Grieve not the Holy Spirit*) and Anger (*They provoked his Holy Spirit*) Sense (*what he shall hear, he will speak*) Speech, there and in many other places: (*It is not you, saith our Saviour, that speak, but the spirit of your Father that is in you:* and, *The Spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them;* and again, very emphatically; *while Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, behold three men seek thee.*) Now these and the like faculties and acts are clearly personal; not representing any quality, or energy, but a lively and intellectual substance. To interpret all these things as spoken by fiction or dramatically, what is it but to transform God's oracles into Pythian riddles, and of Theology to frame a Mythology? that sometime for emphasis sake, in matters less dark or high, the Holy Scripture may sometime use such schemes, nothing I confess doth hinder; but that perpetually it should involve such a most grave and sublime matter with such *torments* forms of speech, doth in truth not seem consentaneous to its most holy and simple Majesty: As more simple, more clearly and more intelligibly, so more compendiously it might have been said, God knoweth, God willeth, God is thus or thus affected, God speaketh; than, God's virtue knoweth, God's power willeth, God's efficacy speaketh; if these manners of speech did not otherwise differ, at least the former would be more clear, simple and expedite, nor would it so yield occasion to errors and doubts; and therefore more worthy it would be of the Holy Writ. However such Prosopopæia's should not be inept, but such as most appositely should agree to the matter proposed, which would not happen in this case; for of those personal attributes some at least do scarce admit those figurate senses, or do plainly refuse them; 'tis hard to say that a divine power doth know, or hear; and who will say that a divine efficacy is affected with anger, or sorrow?

I add, that when the sin of blasphemy is said to be committed against the Holy Spirit just in the same form of speech as against the Son, it is signified that the Holy Spirit is in the same manner a person as the Son is a person; otherwise the comparison would not seem to be well framed.

4. The Holy Spirit in the same manner, and by like right as the Father and Son, is the object of our faith, worship, obedience; the which as by divers other ways (as afterwards we may shew) so especially doth appear from the form of Baptism instituted and prescribed by our Lord; where we as well are baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit, as of the Father and Son; wherein is signified, and by a solemn contestation ratified, on the part of God, that those three joined and confederated (as it were) are conspiringly propitious and favourable to us; that they do receive us into their discipline, grace and patronage; that they are ready, and by virtue of promise in a manner bound, to bestow on us excellent benefits and privileges (on us, I say, performing the laws and conditions of the
A a a 2 covenant

covenant then entered into) On our part, that we do with sound and firm faith equally (that is thorowly and entirely) acknowledge and confesse those three; that we repose an equal (that is a most firm) hope and confidence in them; that we do most highly reverence all and each of them; that we do sincerely and seriously undertake and promise a perpetual (and nearest, to what we are able, a

Εἰ δὲ μὴ αἱ τρεῖς ἁγίασται οἱ κατὰ
χρόνον πρὶν ἢ βαπτισθῆναι βαπτισθέντες
ἢ τελειῶνται τὸ βαπτισμὸν δεχόμενοι ἢ
ἢ πρὸς συνήθειαν. Athan. Dial. 1. con-
tra Maced. p. 265.

perfect) obedience to them: doing which things, we do (as *Athanasius*, or an ancient Writer under his name observeth) yield more than a simple adoration to the Holy Spirit: (Since faith he, *they that are catechized in order to Baptism, are not before they are Baptized, perfect Christians, but being Baptized are*

consummated; Baptism therefore imports more than adoration) Hence who sees not in this first and principal mystery of our religion the Holy Spirit is exhibited to us as a person, that about him as such this excellent part of our duty, this eximious worship is conversant? Attending to this point we may also see the adverse opinion to be urged with many inconveniences: for if the Holy Spirit be not a person, not aptly (or rather very incongruously) he is put into the same rank with the other two persons; not rightly are things so wholly differing in kind (things subsistent and not subsistent) conjoined, and just in the same form proposed as like objects of worship; yea superfluously and to no purpose doth the Holy Spirit seem to be adjoined, if by it nothing beside the divine efficacy is designed: for acknowledging the Father, we do withal acknowledge his power and efficacy, congruous to the divine nature; worshipping the Father, we do together adore his power; devoting our selves in obedience to the Father, we do likewise subject our selves to his power: as if one hath promised faith and loyalty to the King, he therein hath abundantly satisfied his duty; so that there is no farther need to profess himself devoted to the King's power or efficacy: who sees not that in such a case it is superfluous and idle to sever the King from his royal power? One may also ask, why with as good reason we should not be consecrated into the name of the divine goodness, of the divine justice, of the divine wisdom, or of any other divine attribute, as into the name of the divine power? The Socinian exposition therefore doth cast strange clouds and incongruities upon this august mystery; which yet in decency should be most clearly and simply propounded; lest in the very entrance of our Christian profession an occasion should be given of stumbling into great error.

* *Εν αὐτῷ σώματι*
μαρτυρεῖται, in a
bodily shape, as
it is said in
the Gospel.

5. The personality of the Holy Ghost is also perspicuously evinced, from its being represented under the visible shape of a subsistent * thing. A substantial thing is no proper symbol, or representative of a thing accidental; nor commodiously may assume its name: to a thing having no subsistence it doth not well sute to descend like a Dove, and to rest upon Christ: supposing the Spirit were only the efficacy of God the Father, seeing the effects of faculties and operations are most aptly attributed to the persons having or exerting them, it could have been said (and that more rightly and properly) that the Father himself did appear in a corporeal figure, that the Father descended, that the Father sat upon Christ, that the Father was seen by the Holy Baptist; the which it were rash to affirm.

Cur non hic accipiamus visibilibus infirmatam per creaturam visibilem Trinitatis aequalitatem, atque in tribus personis unum, eandemque substantiam. Aug. de Trin. 2. 11, 12.

Gen. 18. 1.
Ex. 6. 3.
Apoc. 4. 8.
Deut. 6. 4.

I forbear to alledge, that the Holy Spirit is reckoned among the three that bear witness in heaven; that the sin against the Holy Ghost is distinguished from the sin against God the Father. I also pass over, that a Trinity of Persons (as many of the Fathers conceive) was represented in the apparition to Abraham, where it is said, *The Lord appeared, and Three men appeared to him*; as also that the Hymn [*Trisagion*] (in *Isay* and the *Apocalypse*) does insinuate it likewise that the phrases *Creavit Elobim* (Gods in the plural, did create in the singular) *Faciamus hominem, let us make man*; *Jebovah Elobim, the Lord our Gods*; and the like may well hither be referred. For from what hath been said, the Socinian error may seem abundantly confuted.

III. We thirdly now assert (supposing his personality) that the Holy Spirit is God, coessential to God the Father, and God the Son; or that the one divine nature (with all its attributes and perfections) is common to him with the Father; or that (which is the same) the Holy Spirit is God, that most High God, most absolute and properly so called (for, seeing the Holy Scriptures do frequently inculcate

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cate that there is but one God, if the Holy Spirit be God, he must necessarily be coessential to the Father and the Son.) Now that he is God, we against the Macedonians, or Semi-Arians, do assert, and by these Arguments prove :

I. The most proper names of God, and the most divine titles are every where (according to just interpretation, and by perspicuous consequence) attributed unto the Holy Spirit : inasmuch as often (almost ever) upon various occasions the same words, works and acts are referr'd to God and the Holy Spirit ; so that whatever God is said to have spoken, to have performed, to have made, that also is reported, said, transacted, produced by the Holy Ghost ; and reciprocally, whatever doth any way regard the Holy Spirit, that is referr'd to God ; the which doth argue, that between the beings denoted by the names God and Holy Spirit an essential identity, or unity doth interceed. Of the *Israelites* being wickedly incredulous and refractory it is said : *They tempted and provoked the most High God, and kept not his testimonies* ; the same *Esay* thus expresseth : *They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit.* In *Esay* (6. 9.) God is said to send the Prophets ; St. Paul report-
ing it saith, the Holy Ghost sent them. S. Peter chargeth *Ananias*, that he had lied to the Holy Spirit ; and thence that he had lied to God : *Ananias* (saith he) *why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost ?* presently he subjoins, *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God* ; he plainly by those names designeth the same things, and more than intimates it to be the same thing to lie to God, and to lie to the Spirit. Our Lord as man was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and for that reason was the Son of God : *The Holy Ghost* (saith the Angel) *shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* What consequence were there of this, if the Holy Ghost is not God ? Our Lord is also said to have performed his miracles by the Power of God, and by the Power of the Holy Spirit indifferently : *If I* (saith he in S. Matthew) *by the spirit of God cast out Devils* : In S. Luke he saith ; *If I by the Finger* (that is by the Power) *of God cast out Devils* ; and both Phrases S. Paul doth equipollently express by the Power of the Holy Ghost : and S. Peter says, that *God did the miracles by him.* The Holy Scripture, because dictated by the Holy Spirit, is said to be *inspired*, or *inspir- ed* by God. *The Spirit spake in the Prophets* (saith S. Peter, and the other holy Writers commonly) *God spake in them*, saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, and others likewise, so often as the Holy Scripture is called the word of God. The Holy Spirit doth shed abroad and work charity in our hearts ; we are thence said to be *taught* by God to love one another ; yea every virtue, all holiness is promiscuously ascribed to God and the Holy Ghost as its immediate authors : *To be led by the Spirit of God, and God worketh in us to will and to do*, do signifie the same thing. Every faithful Christian is therefore called a temple (that is a place consecrated to God) because the Holy Spirit in a special manner is present in him : *Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?* (saith S. Paul in our Text) know ye not that ye are God's temple ? whence should we know it ? from hence, that God's Spirit inhabiteth you, because the inhabitation of the Spirit is the same with the inhabitation of God. The same Apostle again : *In whom ye are also builded together for an inhabitation of God thro' the Spirit* ; for an inhabitation of God in the Spirit, that is therefore an inhabitation of God, because the Spirit dwelleth in you ; how could the Divinity of the Holy Spirit be more expressly declared ? we may add that S. Paul calleth the Holy Spirit, Lord, : *the Lord is that Spirit* ; which Spirit in the words immediately following is called *the Spirit of the Lord* ; the which also before (as S. Chrysostom noteth) is called *the Spirit of the living God* : the Spirit therefore of the Lord is the Lord himself, unto whom the Jews, when the veil covering their minds is taken off, shall return. (Lastly, S. John affirms the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to be one ; and therefore the Holy Ghost is God.)

Hence (for corollary to this argument) we see how we may retund the importunity of the Macedonians, who did nothing but ask where in Scripture the Holy Ghost is called God : where say you is he called God ? where not, say I ? almost every where he in effect is so called : seeing when all about in the same deed, or in the same history, the same words and acts are reported of *Cesar* and of the Emperor, it may rightly be pronounced, that *Cesar* is there called Emperor ; which

Psal. 78. 56.
Ila. 63. 10.
Acts 28. 25.
Acts 5. 3, 4.
Luc. 1. 35.
Matt. 12. 28.
Luke 11. 19.
Rom. 15. 19.
Acts 2. 22.
2 Tim. 3. 16.
1 Pet. 1. 11.
Heb. 1. 1.
2 Pet. 1. 21.
Luke 1. 70.
Rom. 5. 5.
1 Thel. 4. 8.
Rom. 8. 14.
Phil. 2. 13.
2 Cor. 3. 16.
17. 6. 19.
2 Cor. 6. 16.
Rom. 8. 9.
Eph. 2. 22.
2 Cor. 3. 17.
John 5. 73.
Dial. advers.
Maced. apud
Athan.

which no man, I suppose, will contradict. The case is here plainly the same between the Holy Spirit and God.

2. To the Holy Spirit are most expressly attributed all the incommunicable perfections of God, the essential characters and properties of the divine nature. The very epithet of Holy (absolutely, in way of excellence characteristically put) is one of them: for (as it is in *Hannah's* song) *There is none holy as the Lord; neither is there any beside thee*: there is none beside God absolutely and perfectly. Holy (that is, by a most remote distance severed from all things, far exalted above all things, peculiarly venerable and august in majesty) whence *1 Jo. 4. 14*, the Holy one, is a distinctive title of God. Yea the name of Spirit it self (absolutely and eminently put, and so importing highest purity and perfectest actuality) doth seem to imply the same. Also eternity, immensity, omniscience, omnipotency (than which no more high perfections, or more proper to God can be conceived) are attributed to the Holy Spirit. Eternity; for the Apostle to the Hebrews calls him *aidm wvua*, the eternal Spirit. (How much more, saith he, shall the blood of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience?) Immensity; *Whither* (saith the Psalmist) *shall I go from thy Spirit? and whither shall I fly from thy face?* The question involveth a negation; and signifieth a manifest reason thereof: I cannot fly any whither from thy Spirit, because it is every where present. Omniscience; *The Spirit*, saith S. Paul, *doth search all things* (that is, it perfectly comprehendeth all things) *even the deep things of God*; *1 Jo. 3. 20*, the depths, or deepest things of God, (and consequently all things, which God knows, or can be known) even those things, which to comprehend doth as far exceed the condition of a creature, as it goeth beyond the capacity of one man to discern the cogitations and affections of another man; for such a comparison S. Paul doth make. Our Saviour in the Gospel saith, *None knoweth who is the Son, but the Father; nor who is the Father but the Son*: but the Holy Spirit did questionless know who was the Father, and who the Son; he had a knowledge therefore most divine and incommunicable. Particularly to the Holy Spirit is assigned the knowledge of future contingencies; which knowledge is peculiarly high and most proper to God, and is therefore called divination; the which peculiarly is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, as its immediate principle; whence he is called the Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of truth; and from him all the Prophets are said to derive their foreknowing power. To these may be adjoined other no less divine attributes of the Holy Spirit; as *Independency* in will and operation; for, *All these things* (saith S. Paul, that is the production of those excellent graces, the distribution of those wonderful gifts) *doth one and the same Spirit work, dividing to every one as he willeth*.

Εἰ μὴ ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ τὸ ὅλον σώμα ἐκκλησίαν, ὡς αὐτὸς ὁ Χριστός, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ἐκκλησίαν, ὡς αὐτὸς ὁ Χριστός, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ἐκκλησίαν, ὡς αὐτὸς ὁ Χριστός, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ἐκκλησίαν. Athan. contra Apoll. T. 1. p. 607.

And as the wind bloweth where it willeth, nor can be determined or hindered by any thing, so (as our Lord insinuates in the Gospel) the Holy Spirit according to his pleasure worketh every where. Absolute goodness, which belongeth only to God (for, *there is none but one, God himself*) but, *Thy Spirit* (saith the Psalmist) *is good, lead me into the land of uprightness*. Most absolute veracity (which also doth imply both perfect knowledge, and extream goodness) the which is signified by the title of truth abstractedly assigned to him: *It is* (saith S. John) *the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth*; that is, most absolutely and perfectly veracious. In fine, omnipotency doth belong to the Holy Spirit, as by his works doth appear, which we shall immediately propound in the next argument. For,

3. Most divine operations (transcending the power of any created thing) are ascribed to the Holy Ghost: such are; to create things, and make the world; for it was the Spirit which resting upon the unshapen mass did hatch the world: *By his spirit* (saith Job) *he hath garnished the heavens*. [And, *By the word of the Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth*, or by his Spirit.] But he (as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith) *who made all things, is God*. To conserve things: *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth*, saith the Psalmist, speaking about the continued production or conservation of things. Particularly to produce Man both at first and continually: for the soul of the Protoplast was derived from

from the Spirit of God; and good *Elihu* professeth of himself, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*; yea (which worthily may be deemed somewhat greater and more difficult) to create men again or renew them, being marr'd and deformed, unto the image of God (quickning a man's spirit in a manner dead, enlightning his blind mind, reforming his perverse affections) which to effect as it is ascribed to God, so also to the Holy Spirit in places numberless. Also (which is connected with that) to justify a man, to remit sins (not ministerially, but, which is proper to God, principally and absolutely) for, *ye are* (saith *S. Paul*) *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*. To animate the Church by his influence, to govern it by his power and guidance, to prescribe laws unto it, to set rulers over it, to dispense gifts and graces requisite for the building, propagation and preservation thereof, are works of his, and together the most proper and principal works of divine power. To perform miracles, that is works contrary or superiour to the laws of nature, and therefore only congruous to God; the doing of which is peculiarly attributed to God's Spirit; particularly to raise the dead, which is the highest of miracles; *If* (saith *S. Paul*) *he that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you*. In fine, there is no work either of nature, or of providence, or of grace, so sublime, or so difficult, which is not ascribed to the efficacy of the Holy Spirit; the which doth shew his sovereign authority, and his Almighty power; for surely by no more plain and cogent arguments, than by these, can the omnipotence of the supreme Deity it self be demonstrated.

4. The Divine Majesty of the Holy Spirit may also be asserted from the divine Worship which is duly to be yielded to him. It by God's appointment is yielded to him, when being solemnly baptized in his name we do profess to place our faith and hope upon him, we do protest our reverence and obedience to him. The same is then exhibited, when (according to the rule of *S. Paul*) together with the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God the Father, we implore the communion of the Holy Spirit. The same is not obscurely signified whenever (that which often occurs) in the execution of divine (most excellent and admirable) offices and works, the Holy Ghost is put in conjunction and co-ordination with the Father and the Son: For that by God most jealous and curious (as it were) of his Honour (who more than once professeth that he will not impart his glory to another) should be allowed to any creature, to march in even rank, to seem advanced to an equal pitch of dignity with himself, is no-wise credible, or agreeable to reason. (*What communion can there be between a Creature and his Creator? why should that which is made be numbred together with his Maker in the performing of all things? saith S. Athanasius well.*) Moreover, what dignity belongs to the Holy Spirit, what reverence is due to him, appears clearly from that the blasphemy against him is peculiarly unpardonable, whenas the faults committed against God the Father, and obloquy against the Son are capable of remission; for the nature of things doth scarce bear, that to detract from a creature should be a crime so capital, or receive such aggravation; it cannot well be conceived that the honour of a creature should in such a manner be prefer'd to the honour of God himself. *How*, saith *S. Ambrose*, *can any one dare to reckon the Holy Ghost among creatures? or who doth so render himself obnoxious, that if he derogate from a creature, he may not suppose it to be relaxable to him by some pardon?*

5. Again, whereas Christ even as a man is elevated in dignity and eminence above all creatures (above every Name, far above all principality, authority and power, as the Apostle teaches us) he is yet in that respect inferiour, and gives place to the Holy Spirit. For as such he did receive his nature from the Holy Spirit; *That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost*, saith the Evangelist; and, *more honour than the house hath he that made it*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. Christ was sent by the Holy Spirit; *The Lord God* (saith the Prophet of him) *and his Spirit hath sent me*. But, *The Apostle* (saith he himself) *is not greater than he*

Job 33. 4. Hic spiritus in me est, et datus est mihi a Domino. Bal. Eph. 4. 24. 2. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 5. 17. Col. 3. 10. Tit. 3. 5. Luke 5. 27. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Rom. 8. 2. Tit. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Act. 15. 28. 20. 28. Eph. 4. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 1. Heb. 2. 4. Rom. 8. 11. 2 Cor. 13. 13. Ef. 42. 8. 48. 11.

Ποία ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ κτίσματος μετὰ τοῦ κτίστη; ἢ τί τὸ πᾶν ὁμοιοῦν ἀντιλαμβάνεται τῷ ποιητῇ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ πλάσαντι. Ath. Orat. in Ar. Ἀποδείξτε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ ἡμῶν, ὅτι καὶ τὸ πᾶν ὁμοιοῦν τῷ θεῷ ὡς καὶ τὸ πᾶν ὁμοιοῦν τῷ ποιητῇ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ πλάσαντι. Id. ad Rom. 1. p. 600.

Quomodo inter creaturas auditur quicquam Spiritum S. computare? aut quis sic se obligat, ut si creaturam derogaverit, non putet sibi hoc aliqua venia relaxandum? Ambros.

Phil. 2. 9. Eph. 1. 21. Quomodo creatura dicitur, qui Dominus Creator, ex Maria comprobatur? Aug. Serm. 6. Mat. 1. de Temp. Heb. 3. 3. Isa. 48. 16. John 3. 16. that

that sent him; the Sent is not greater, that is (by a *verbum*, or *missum*, the figure of diminution) he is inferior to the Sender. Christ was consecrated, and inaugurated into his offices by the Holy Spirit: *The Spirit of the Lord* (foretold *Esaias* of Christ, as the Evangelists interpret) *is upon me, because he hath anointed me*. But, without controversy the lesser is blessed by the greater, saith the Apostle. Christ was by the Holy Ghost endowed with excellent gifts abundantly and beyond measure; but, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*, is an Aphorism out of our Lord's own mouth. In fine, our Lord did by virtue of the Holy Spirit perform miracles; by the Eternal Spirit he offered himself to God; by the Spirit he was raised from the dead: which things are manifest arguments that the Holy Spirit doth excel Christ as man; wherefore seeing beside God only, nothing is in worth or dignity superiour to Christ, it necessarily follows that the Holy Spirit is God.

6. I add, that whereas upon divers occasions the ranks and orders of Creatures are mentioned in Scripture (as where all the Quire of them is summon'd and cited to sing the praises of God; namely, the Angels, the heavens, the earth, men, beasts, plants; when Catalogues are recited of things made by Christ, and subject to him, among which Angels, Thrones, Dominations, Dignities and Powers are mentioned) it is strange, that this top of creatures (if a creature he be) this leader of the Quire should wholly be pretermitted. It is very probable, that if the Prophets had known, or the Apostles had thought this, they would have not been silent about it, they would, as reason had required, have set him in the head of all; which if they had done, they would have exempted us from these scruples and errors in so high a point: but they could not do it, because indeed the Holy Spirit is not in the order of creatures; the which we do seem sufficiently to have proved.

To all the premised points no small accession of weight doth come from the authority of so many Holy Fathers and Councils; and from the consent of the Church, running down through so many ages; to oppose which, without very weighty and manifest reasons, doth as much recede from prudence, as it is far from modesty.

III. The next point we shall consider is the Original of the Holy Spirit; the which we do assert to be in way of procession jointly from God the Father, and God the Son; meaning hereby, that to this divine person in a peculiar manner (incomprehensible indeed and ineffable, but which in some manner by this term procession may be signified) the divine Essence which he hath, is communicated from the Father and the Son.

That the Holy Spirit is not from himself, as the Father is, is plain; for that being supposed, there would be more first principles than one, and consequently more Gods than one; which is contrary to the whole tenour of Scripture; neither did any ever affirm so much.

That he proceedeth from the Father, appeareth from that the Father is the fountain and first principle of all Essence: and by our Saviour the Spirit is said *to go out from the Father*; and he is called *πνεῦμα τοῦ πατρὸς*, *The Spirit that is out of God* (the Father) by S. Paul: and this is generally confessed.

That also he doth proceed from the Son (which is by the modern Greeks denied) may be proved.

1. Because as he is called the Spirit of the Father, so he is also often stiled the Spirit of the Son; which signifies he is in a like manner related to the Son as to the Father; and that both therefore in a like manner conspire to his production.

2. He is said to be sent as from the Father, so also from the Son. But mission and procession do not seem to differ, except in manner of speech (one more especially denoting the name whence, the other the act or effect of the same thing) Nor doth it agree to the Holy Spirit, who (as we have shewed) is God, to go out, or be sent otherwise than by reception of essence.

3. The Son saith of the Holy Spirit, *inquit, he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you*; and to the same purpose, *whatsoever he shall hear, he shall speak*; by which saying it is intimated that the Holy Spirit doth receive knowledge from the Son; the which, being God, he cannot otherwise do, than by receiving his essence from the Son.

4. The Holy Spirit is a person third in order; seeing then the Son before him in order (in order I say, not in time) obtaineth the divine nature; so that, when the

Isa. 61. 1, 12.

Luke 4. 48.

Heb. 7. 7.

John 3. 34.

Luke 4. 1, 2.

40. 52.

Acts 21. 35.

Mat. 12. 28.

Heb. 9. 14.

Rom. 1. 4.

8. 11.

Psal. 103.

148. &c.

1 Pet. 3. 22.

Col. 1. 16.

Eph. 1. 22.

Rom. 8. 38.

in quo lavati

sunt

John 16. 13.

Novat. de

Trin. 31.

John 15. 16.

1 Cor. 2. 12.

Mat. 10. 20.

Gal. 4. 6.

Rom. 8. 9.

1 Pet. 1. 11.

Phil. 1. 19.

John 16. 13.

14.

the Holy Spirit doth proceed, it is common to both Father and Son, he cannot receive it from the Father separately, or without also deriving it from the Son. Thus our Lord himself seemeth to have argued, when he saith: *All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* John 16. 15. 17. 10.

5. Lastly, our Saviour (as S. Augustine and Cyril conceive) did signifie this procession from himself, when breathing on his disciples he said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* John 20. 22.

6. To these Arguments may be added the consentient authority of the Latin Fathers, Hilary, Ambrose, Austin, and the rest; which explicitly teach this doctrine. Also the more antient Greeks, Athanasius, Basil, both the Gregories, Epiphanius, Cyrillus Alexandrinus do (although seldom expressly in terms, yet equi-
Deus Pater
co-æternus
sibi.
ἴσθι.
τὸ πνεῦμα
ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς
ἐκπορεύεται.
Athanas. contra
Apol. T. 1.
p. 601.

We proceed now to the peculiar offices, functions and operations of the Holy Spirit: Many such there are in an especial manner attributed or appropriated to him; which as they respect God, seem reducible to two general ones: the declarations of God's mind, and the execution of his will; as they are referr'd to man (for in regard to other Beings, the Scripture doth not so much consider what he performs, it not concerning us to know it) are especially, the producing in us all qualities and dispositions, the guiding and aiding us in all actions requisite or conducive to our eternal happiness and salvation; to which may be added the intercession between God and man, which jointly respecteth both.

1. First, it is his especial work to declare God's mind to us: Whence he is stiled *the spirit of truth, the spirit of prophecy, the spirit of revelation*; for that all supernatural light and wisdom hath ever proceeded from him. He instructed all the Prophets that have been since the world began to know, he enabled them to speak the mind of God concerning things present and future. Holy men (that have taught men their duty, and led them in the way to bliss) were but his instruments, speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. John 15. 26.
Eph. 1. 17.
Rev. 19. 10.
Veritas ubi-
cunque est, a
Spiritu Sancto
est.
Luke 1. 70.
2 Pet. 1. 21.

By his inspiration the Holy Scriptures (the most full and certain witness of God's mind, the law and testimony by which our life is to be directed and regulated) were conceived. He guided the Apostles into all truth, and by them instructed the world in the knowledge of God's gracious intentions toward mankind, and in all the holy mysteries of the Gospel: *That which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit.* Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, saith S. Paul. All the knowledge we can pretend to in these things doth proceed meerly from his revelation, doth wholly rely upon his authority. 1 Tim. 3. 16.
John 16. 13.
Eph. 3. 5.
1 Cor. 2. 11.

2. To him it especially belongs to execute the will of God in matters transcending the ordinary power and course of nature. Whence he is called the power of the most High (that is, the substantial power and virtue of God) the Finger of God (as by comparing the expressions of S. Matthew and S. Luke may appear) and whatever eminent God hath designed, he is said to perform by him; by him he framed the World, and (as Job speaketh) garnished the Heavens. By him he governeth the World, so that all extraordinary works of providence (when God beside the common law, and usual course of nature, doth interpose to do any thing) all miraculous performances are attributed to his Energy. By him our Saviour, by him the Apostles, by him the Prophets are expressly said to perform their wonderful works; but especially by him. Luke 1. 35.
24. 49. 11. 20.
Mat. 12. 28.
Psal. 33. 6.
Gen. 1. 1.
Job 26. 13.

3. God manages that great work, so earnestly designed by him, of our salvation; working in us all good dispositions, capacifying us for salvation, directing and assisting us in all our actions tending thereto.

We naturally are void of those good dispositions in understanding, will and affection, which are needful to render us acceptable to God, fit to serve and please him, capable of any favour from him, of any true happiness in our selves: Our minds naturally are blind, ignorant, stupid, giddy, and prone to error, especially in things supernatural, spiritual, and abstracted from ordinary sense. Our wills are froward and stubborn, light and unstable, inclining to evil, and averse from what is truly good; our affections are very irregular, disorderly and unsettled:

to remove which bad dispositions (inconsistent with God's friendship and favour, driving us into sin and misery) and to beget those contrary to them, the knowledge and belief of divine truth, a love of goodness and delight therein, a well composed, orderly and steady frame of spirit, God in mercy doth grant to us the Virtue of his Holy Spirit; who first *opening our Hearts*, so as to let in and apprehend the light of divine truth, then by representation of proper Arguments persuading our reason to embrace it, begetteth divine knowledge, wisdom and faith in our minds, which is the work of illumination and instruction, the first part of his office respecting our salvation.

Acts 16. 14.
1 Cor. 12. 8, 9.

Then by continual impressions he bendeth our inclinations, and mollifieth our hearts, and tempereth our affections to a willing compliance with God's will, and a hearty complacence in that which is good and pleasing to God; so breeding all pious and vertuous inclinations in us, reverence toward God, charity to men, sobriety and purity as to our selves, with the rest of those amiable and heavenly virtues of soul, which is the work of sanctification, another great part of his Office.

Tit. 3. 5.
Col. 2. 12,
13.
Eph. 2. 5.
4. 23, 24.
2. 10.
2 Cor. 5. 17.

Both these operations together (enlightning our minds, sanctifying our will and affections) do constitute, and accomplish that work, which is styled the Regeneration, Renovation, Vivification, New-creation, Resurrection of a man; the faculties of our souls being so improved, that we become, as it were, other men thereby; able and apt to do that for which before we were altogether indisposed, and unfit.

Gal. 5. 25.
Rom. 8. 14.

He also directeth, and governeth our actions, continually leading, and moving us in the ways of obedience to God's holy will and law. As we live by him (having a new spiritual life implanted in us) so we *walk by him*, are continually led and acted by his conduct, and help. He reclaimeth us from error and sin; he supporteth and strengtheneth us in temptation; he adviseth, and admonisheth, exciteth and encourageth us to all works of piety and virtue.

Rom. 8. 26,
27.
1 John 5. 14.

Particularly, he guideth and quickneth us in devotion, shewing us what we should ask, raising in us holy desires, and comfortable hopes, disposing us to approach unto God with fit dispositions of mind, love and reverence, and humble confidence.

Rom. 15. 13.
Heb. 3. 6.
1 Pet. 1. 8.

It is also a notable part of the Holy Spirit's office to comfort and sustain us, as in all our religious practice, so particularly in our doubts, difficulties, distresses and afflictions; to beget joy, peace and satisfaction in us, in all our performances, and all our sufferings, whence the title of Comforter belongeth to him.

Rom. 8. 23.
2 Cor. 1. 22.
5. 5.
Eph. 1. 14.

It is also another part thereof, to assure us of God's gracious love and favour, and that we are his children; confirming in us the hopes of our everlasting inheritance. We feeling our selves to live spiritually by him, to love God, and goodness, to thirst after righteousness, and to delight in pleasing God, are thereby raised to hope God loves and favours us; and that he having by so authentick a seal ratified his word and promise, having already bestowed so sure a pledge, so precious an earnest, so plentiful first-fruits, will not fail to make good the remainder designed and promised us, of everlasting joy and bliss.

2 Cor. 12. 12,
13.

4. The Holy Ghost is also our intercessor with God; presenting our supplications, and procuring our good. He cryeth in us, he pleadeth for us to God. Whence he is peculiarly called *Advocate*; that is, one who is called in by his good word, or countenance to aid him, whose cause is to be examined, or petition to be considered.

Acts 20. 28.
Eph. 4. 12.

5. To which things we may add, that the Holy Ghost bears the office of a soul to God's Church, informing, enlivening and actuating the whole body thereof; connecting and containing its members in spiritual union, harmony, order, peace and safety; especially quickning the principal members (the Governours and Pastors) thereof; constituting them in their function, qualifying them for the discharge thereof, guiding and aiding them in it: *Take heed* (saith S. Paul to the Elders of Ephesus) *unto your selves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers: And, all these things worketh that one, and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he willet.*

1 Cor. 12. 11.

We have thus passed over the several main doctrines concerning the Blessed Holy Spirit; the application of which to practice briefly should be this; the uses which the consideration of these points may have, are these.

1. We

1. We are upon the premises obliged to render all honour, and adoration, to the Majesty of the divine Spirit.

2. The consideration of these things should work in us an humble affection, and a devout thankfulness to God for so inestimable a favour conferr'd upon us, as is the presence and inhabitation, the counsel, conduct and assistance of God's Holy Spirit in us. Him we gratefully must own and acknowledge as the Author of our spiritual life, of all good dispositions in us, of all good works performed by us, of all happiness that we are capable of; to him therefore we must humbly render all thanks and praise, assuming nothing to our selves.

3. We should earnestly desire, and pray for God's Spirit, the fountain of such excellent benefits, such graces, such gifts, such privileges, such joys and blessings inestimable. If we heartily invite him, if we fervently pray for him, he assuredly will come to us; for so our Lord hath promised, *That our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them which ask it.* Luke 11. 13.

4. We should endeavour to demean our selves well toward the Holy Spirit; yielding to that heavenly guest, when he vouchsafeth to arrive, a ready entrance, and a kind welcome into our hearts; entertaining him with all possible respect and observance; hearkening attentively to his holy suggestions, and carefully obeying him; not quenching the divine light, or the devout heat which he kindleth in us; not resisting his kindly motions and suasions; not grieving, or vexing him; that so with satisfaction he may continue, and reside in us, to our infinite benefit and comfort. It should engage us to cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; that we may be fit temples for so holy and pure a Spirit to dwell in; lest he, by our impurities, be offended, loath and forsake us.

5. It is matter of comfort, and encouragement, (exceedingly needful and useful for us) to consider that we have such a guide and assistant in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. If our lusts be strong, our temptations great, our enemies mighty; we need not be disheartned, having this All-wise, and All-mighty friend to advise, and help us: his grace is sufficient for us against all the strength of hell, the flesh, and the world. Let our duty be never so hard, and our natural force never so weak; we shall be able to do all things by him, that strengtheneth us: if we will but faithfully apply our selves to his aid, we cannot fail of good success.

THUS far the Author's Sermons upon the Creed. As to the remaining Articles, he hath only left a short Explication of them, like to that upon the Lord's Prayer, &c. And there needed not much more, considering that the Substance of these Articles had been treated of before: That of the Holy Catholick Church, and of the Communion of Saints in his Discourse of the Unity of the Church, at the end of his Treatise of the Pope's Supremacy; and that of the Forgiveness of Sins, in his Sermons of Justification; and that of the Resurrection of the Body, in his Sermon of the Resurrection of Christ.

The Holy Catholick Church.

THIS Article was, I conceive, adjoined, or inserted here, upon occasion of those many Heresies and Schisms, which from the beginning continually sprang up, to the danger of Christian doctrine, and disturbance of the Church; the introducers thereof meaning thereby to secure the truth of Religion, the authority of Ecclesiastical Discipline, the peace and unity of the Church, by engaging men to disclaim any consent or conspiracy with any

of those erroneous, or contentious people (who had devised new conceits, destructive or dangerous to the Faith, against the general consent of Christians, or drave on troublesome factions, contrary to the common order, and prejudicial to the peace of the Church.) Their meaning of this Article therefore was, I take it, this: I believe, that is, I do adhere unto (for belief, as we at first observed, is to be taken as the nature of the matter requireth) or I am perswaded that I ought to adhere unto that Body of Christians, which diffused over the world retains the Faith which was taught, and the Discipline which was settled, and the Peace which was enjoined by our Lord, and his Disciples; I acknowledge the Doctrines generally embraced by the Churches, founded and instructed by the Apostles; I am ready to observe the received customs, and practices by them derived from Apostolical Institution; I submit to the laws and disciplines by lawful authority established in them; I do persist in charity, concord and communion with them.

And that men antiently should be obliged to profess thus, there is ground both in Reason, and Scripture. In reason, there being no more proper or effectual argument to assure us, that any doctrine is true, or practice warrantable; no means more proper to convince Sectaries (deviating from truth or duty) than the consent of all Churches, of whom (being so distant in place, language, customs, humour; so independent, or coordinate in power) it is not imaginable, that they should soon, or easily conspire in forsaking the doctrines inculcated by the Apostles, or the practices instituted by them; it is the argument which *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and other defenders of Christian truth and peace do press, and it may in matters of this kind pass for a demonstration.

It hath also ground in Scripture; which as it foretells, that pernicious heresies should be introduced, that *many false Prophets should arise, and seduce many*; that *grievous wolves should come in, not sparing the flock*; that *men should arise speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them*; as they warn us to take heed of such men, to reject and refuse hereticks, to mark those which make divisions and scandals, beside the doctrine which Christians had learnt, and to decline from them;

1 Tim. 6. 3.

2 Tim. 1. 13.

14. 3. 14.

Rom. 6. 17.

1 Cor. 11. 2.

2 Thess. 2. 15.

3. 6.

Jude 3.

Eph. 4. 4.

Ubi tres sunt

etiam Laici,

ibi Ecclesia est.

Tertul. Exb.

Cap.

to stand off from such men, as do *intraducunt*, that is, teach things different from Apostolical Doctrine, the Doctrine according to Godliness; as it enjoins us to hold fast the form of sound words, heard from the Apostles; to continue in the things, which we have learned, and been assured of, knowing of whom we learnt them; to obey from the heart, that form of doctrine, into which we were delivered; to keep the traditions, as the Apostles delivered them to us; to stand fast, and hold the traditions which we were taught, whether by word or writing; to strive earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints; as it enjoins us to walk orderly, to obey our guides, or rulers; to pursue peace, to maintain concord, to abide in charity with all good Christians; as it declareth heresies, factions, contentions and separations to be the works of the flesh, proceeding from corrupt dispositions of soul, (pride, covetousness, vanity, rashness, instability, perverseness, craft, hypocrisy, want of conscience) so it also describes the universality of them, who stick to the truth and observe the Law of Christ, keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; to be one body, knit together, and compacted of parts, affording mutual aid and supply to its nourishment and welfare; joined to, and deriving life, motion, sense from one Head; informed by one spirit: as one house built upon the foundation of Prophets and Apostles, Christ himself being the corner-stone, in whom all the building is fitly framed and connected; as one family under one Master; one City under one Governour; one flock under one shepherd; one nation or people subject to the same Law and Government, used to the same speech, custom and conversation; lastly, as one Church or Congregation: for as sometimes every particular Assembly of Christians, and sometimes a larger collection of particular Societies, combined together in one order, and under one Government, are termed Churches; so the whole aggregation of all particular Churches, or of all Christian people, is frequently called the Church; even as the whole body of those who lived in the profession of obedience to the Jewish Law (which was a type of the Christian Church) is called *קהלת ישראל*, the Congregation.

In relation to which Society, these are the duties which we here profess ourselves obliged to, and in effect promise to observe:

1. That

1. That we do, and will persist in the truth of Christian doctrine, deliver'd by our Saviour and his Apostles, attested unto by the general consent of all Christians; avoiding all novelties of opinion deviating from Apostolical Doctrine.
2. That we are obliged to maintain a hearty charity and good affection to all good Christians.
3. That we are bound to communicate with all good Christians, and all Societies sincerely professing faith, charity and obedience to our Lord; so as to join with them, as occasion shall be, in all offices of piety; to maintain good correspondence and concord with them.
4. That we should submit to the discipline and order, should preserve the peace, and endeavour the welfare of that part thereof wherein we live; for what of good or harm is done to a member thereof, is also done to the whole.
5. That we should disavow and shun all factious combinations whatever, of persons corrupting the truth of Christian doctrine, or disturbing the peace of the Church, or of any part thereof.
6. In fine, that we sincerely should wish in our hearts, earnestly pray for, and by our best endeavours promote the peace and prosperity of the whole Catholick Church; whereof we profess our selves members and children; following (as S. Paul directs) *righteousness, faith, charity, peace with those that call upon our Lord,* 2 Tim. 2. 22. *with a pure heart.*

The Communion of Saints.

TH E S E words were not extant in any of the antient *Creeds*, but were afterward inserted; nor as I conceive doth the meaning of them much differ from what was intended in the precedent *Article*; and perhaps it was adjoyned for interpretation thereof; for the meaning of them is, as I take it, that all the Saints (that is all Christians. either in legal presumption, or according to real disposition of heart such) do, in effect, or should, according to obligation, communicate, partake, join together, consent, and agree in what concerneth Saints, or members of the Holy Catholick Church; in believing and acknowledging the same heavenly truth, in performance of devotions, or offices of piety with and for one another, in charitable good will and affection toward one another, in affording mutual advices, assistances and supplies toward the good (either spiritual or temporal) of each other; in condolency and compassion of each others evils, in congratulation and complacency in each others good; in minding the same thing for one another; and bearing one anothers burdens; so that if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoyce with it. This briefly seems to be the meaning of this point; and I need not to insist on clearing the truth, or shewing the uses thereof; the doctrine so manifestly carrying its obligation and its use in the face thereof.

The Forgiveness of Sins.

TH A T men are naturally apt to transgress the laws of God and the dictates of Reason; that so doing they incur guilt, and are exposed to vengeance (from the great Patron of right and goodness, who is injured and dishonoured thereby) that hence they are subject to restless fears, and stinging remorses of conscience; that they cannot be exempted from such obnoxiousness, otherwise than by the free grace and mercy of God, nor be freed from such anxieties otherwise than by an assurance of pardon from him, are points, to natural light, sufficiently manifest.

Of such a disposition or will in God to remit offences, that all men have ever had a presumption, their application to him in religious practice doth shew (for

Luke 24. 47.
And that re-
pentance and
remission of
sins, &c.

Heb. 11. 6. no man would address himself in service to God without a hope, that God is reconcilable to him, and that his service therefore may be acceptable) particularly that general practice of offering sacrifice for expiation of sin, and appeasing God's wrath, doth plainly declare the same.

But this was indeed but a presumption, or conjecture, partly drawn from the necessity of their case (which admitted no other remedy beside that hope) and from man's nature, apt to presume that which most pleaseth; partly grounded upon experience of God's forbearance to punish, and the continuance of his bounty toward men; upon which grounds no man could build a full confidence that he should find mercy; much less could he be satisfied, upon what terms it would be granted, in what manner it should be dispensed, or how far it should extend; these things merely depending on the will of God, and the knowledge of them only upon revelation from him.

Numb. 15. 30.
Deut. 27. 26.
Gal. 3. 10.
The Jewish dispensation (which was particular and preparatory to Christianity) did indeed appoint and accept expiations for some lesser faults, committed out of ignorance and infirmity; but it pretended not to justify from all things; nor upon any terms did it promise remission of great sins wilfully committed, but threatened remediless excision for them; pronouncing dreadful imprecations not only upon the transgressors of some particular laws, but against all those who continued not in all things written in the law to do them; so that the remission tendered by Moses was of a narrow extent, and could hardly exempt any man from obligation to punishment, and from fear thereof; although indeed (to prevent despair, and that which naturally follows thereon, a total neglect of duty) God was pleased by his Prophets, among that people, occasionally to signify somewhat of farther grace (beyond what he was tyed to by the terms of the Covenant with that people) reserved for them, and that he was willing (upon condition of hearty repentance, and real amendment) to receive to mercy even those, who had been guilty of the most heinous offences: but these discoveries, as they were special, and extraordinary, so were they preparatory to the Gospel, and dispensed upon grounds only declared therein.

It is the Gospel only, which explicitly teacheth and tendereth remission of all sins, shewing for what reasons, upon what conditions, to what purposes it is dispensed by God. It clearly, and fully declares, how God in free mercy and pity toward us (being all involved in sin and guilt, and lying under a condemnation to death and misery; all our works being unworthy of acceptance, all our sacrifices being unable in the least part to satisfy for our offences) was pleased himself to provide an obedience worthy of his acceptance, and thoroughly pleasing to him (in effect imputable to us, as performed by one of our kind, and race, and for our sake willingly undertaken, according to his gracious pleasure) to provide a sacrifice in nature so pure, in value so precious, as might be perfectly satisfactory for our offences; in regard to which obedience, God is become reconciled, so as to open his arms of grace to mankind; in respect to which sacrifice he doth offer remission of sins to all men, who shall upon the terms propounded be willing to embrace it; namely, upon condition of faith, and repentance; that is, upon sincerely professing the doctrine of Christ, and heartily resolving to obey his laws. This is that great doctrine so peculiar to the Gospel, from whence especially it hath its name, and is stiled the word of grace; this is that great blessing, which Zachariah in his Prophetical Hymn did praise God for, *The giving knowledge of salvation to God's people in the remission of their sins: according to the tender mercies of our God, in which the day spring from on high hath visited us*; this is the good tidings of great joy to all people, which the Angels did celebrate at our Saviour's birth; this is that main point which our Lord especially charged his Apostles to declare and testify, *that in his name repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations*; that God had exalted him to his right hand, as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins; (to give repentance, that is, to give, as Clemens in his Epistle well expoundeth it, *unvoluntaria*, a place for repentance in order to mercy; or that it should be acceptable, and available for the remission of our sins, as all that on our part is required toward it) all which points (together with the nature of this remission, its causes, its grounds, its ends, its conditions, its means and way of conveyance) are admirably couched in those words of S. Paul: *All men (saith he) have sinned, and are come*

Luke 1. 77.
78.
Luke 2. 10.
Luke 24. 47.
Acts 5. 31.
Rom. 3. 4.
Etc.

come short of the Glory of God; but we are justified freely by his grace, by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath proposed a propitiatory by faith in his blood, for the demonstration of his righteousness, toward the forgiveness of fore-past offences.

The consideration of which point is of exceedingly great use and influence.

1. It should engage us to admire the great goodness of God, and with grateful hearts to praise him for so great a favour: that God being so grievously affronted and wronged by our sins (loaded with extream aggravations) should be at such charge to purchase for us the means of pardon, should offer it so freely, should so earnestly invite and intreat us to accept it; How inexpressible a clemency doth it demonstrate? How great thankfulness doth it require from us?

2. It should beget in us an ardent love to God, answerable to that love which disposed him to bestow on us so inestimable a benefit. We should imitate the debtor in the Gospel, *who most loved him, who had forgiven him most*; and the good Penitent S. Magdalene; who, *because much was forgiven her, did love much*. Luke 7. 41. Luke 7. 47.

3. It is matter and ground of hope and of comfort to us, (is preventive of despair, and immoderate sadness) for that our case cannot be so bad, but there is an assured remedy at hand, if we please to have recourse thereto; the mercy of God upon our true repentance; whereby we infallibly shall obtain that happy state, of which it is said, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven — blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity*. Psal. 32. 1, 2.

4. It is a great engagement to obedience; for that it greatly aggravates our disobedience, and endangers our estate. Having once from God's mercy obtained a cure and state of health, we by relapsing into sin do incur deeper guilt, and expose our selves to greater hazard; *Behold* (saith our Lord in like case) *thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee*. John 5. 14.

5. Lastly, it shews us how much (in conformity to God, and compliance with his will) we should bear with, and forgive the offences, or injuries done to us. You know how strongly our Lord in the Gospel presseth the consideration of God's free pardon bestowed on us to this purpose; how he sets out the extream unreasonableness and disingenuity of those, who (notwithstanding this dealing of God with them) are hard hearted, and unmerciful toward their fellow-servants; how he threatens implacable severity toward them, who *do not from their hearts forgive* to their brethren their trespasses; and promiseth remission of sins to them, who (according to what they profess to do in their prayers) shall forgive to men the offences committed against them; making it not only an indispensable condition, but a sufficient means of obtaining the divine favour and mercy. Matt. 18. 35. Matt. 6. 14.

I shall only farther take notice, that although it be true, that God in the Gospel doth generally propound remission of sins (upon account of our Lord's performances, and in his name) to all that truly repent, and turn unto him; chiefly granting it on this consideration, and not withholding it from any, upon a blameless default of other performances; yet he requires (and complying with his will therein, is part of the duty, which repentance disposes to, and is declared by) that (as well for publick edification, and the honour of his Church, as for the comfort and advantage of persons concerned therein) this repentance should be solemnly declared and approved by the Church; that this remission should be formally dispensed by the hands of God's Ministers, being declared by express words, or ratified by certain seals, or signified by mysterious representations appointed by God. And to remission of sins, as thus dispensed, I doubt not but this Article hath an especial reference; it being in S. Cyprian's form of profession at Baptism expressed by *Credo remissionem peccatorum in Ecclesia*: but because the Church's remitting of sins thus, is by virtue of that authority, which Christ imparted to his Church, called the *Power of the Keys*; I shall upon this occasion here briefly explain the nature of that Power. Acts 26. 20. 3. 19.

The Power of the Keys.

Matt. 16. 19.

THIS Power in part is founded upon (and this name of it was wholly drawn from) those words of our Lord to S. Peter; *And I will give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* Where that which our Lord doth promise to S. Peter (not to him personally, but, as the *Fathers* interpret it, representatively; he then signifying the Church, and standing in the place of its Governours, however not exclusively; for it) is by a parity of reason to be extended to all the Apostles, and after them to all the Governours of the Church; unto whom the same power is other-where in terms equivalent committed, and by whom it was exercised; as may appear from comparing the practice of the Apostles, and of the Church in continual succession from them, with the nature or intent of this power; the which it is now our business very briefly to explain.

It is expressed in a metaphorical term: and it is therefore to be understood according to the analogy it beareth with the thing assumed to resemble it; as the nature of the object thereof doth require, or admit. Wherefore it being the main property of a Key, by opening, to give ingress, and egress; (admittance into a place, or emission from it) or by shutting to exclude from entrance, or to detain within: this power may be supposed to imply a right; or ability to perform such actions in reference to its object, which is the Kingdom of heaven.

By *the kingdom of heaven* is understood the state of religion under the Gospel; in distinction (as it seems) from the constitution and condition thereof under the *Mosaic Law*. In the times of the Law, God's Law was in a manner terrestrial; he being King of the *Jewish Nation* particularly; *Jerusalem* being his Royal seat; and the Temple his throne; where he was served with external and visible performances; where he expressly promised earthly benefits and privileges (long life and prosperity in the land of *Canaan*) and threatened punishments answerable. But in the Gospel God is worshipped universally, as resident in heaven, as requiring spiritual services, addressed to heaven; as conferring rewards and inflicting penalties relating to the future state there. This state therefore aptly is called *the kingdom of heaven*, of which all Christians are subjects; the Body of whom consequently may also be named the kingdom of heaven; for the word kingdom sometime denoteth the constitution of things in, or under which a certain people do live, sometimes the people themselves.

Now whereas this state hath two degrees, or the persons under it two conditions, one here present upon earth in transition, and acquisition; the other hereafter of residence, and fruition in heaven (one like that of the *Israelites* travelling in the wilderness, the other like their possession of *Canaan*) in this case we may well understand both; but chiefly the first (the Kingdom of Grace here) wherein immediately this power is exerted; although its effects do finally refer and reach to the other (the Kingdom of Glory hereafter.)

Let us then consider how this Kingdom may be opened, or shut by the Governours of the Church: this evidently may be performed several ways.

1. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened by yielding real helps, inducing to enter into the Church; it may be shut, by the same means inducing persons to continue within it. So by instruction, advice, persuasion, admonition, reproof; by affording fit means, and occasions; by prescribing laws and rules conducing to those purposes, the Governours are obliged to open and shut the Kingdom of heaven; and the doing so therefore may be conceived an ingredient of this power.

2. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened by intercession, or imprecation from God of fit dispositions qualifying persons to enter, together with a mind willing to do so. Thus, as all Christians in their way may open the Kingdom, so particularly the Governours by their office and function are obliged to do it,

1 Tim. 2. 1.
&c.

as the publick mouths of the Church. Wherefore S. Paul enjoins, that *Supplication be made for all men; because God would have all men to be saved, and to have them*

them come to the knowledge of the truth; or would have all men brought into this Kingdom.

3. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened or shut by prudent discrimination of persons, who are fit to be received into the Church (*εὐδοκίαι εἰς ἐκκλησίαν*, well disposed for the kingdom, as S. Luke speaks) or who deserve to be rejected from it.

Thus the Governours of the Church do open and shut the Kingdom, when they determine who shall be admitted to Baptism (which is *Ecclesia janua*; and *porta gratia*, as S. Austin calls it) and who shall be refused; they admitted, who appear competently instructed in Christian Doctrine, and well resolved to obey it; they refused, who seem in those points ignorant, or ill resolved.

4. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened or shut by judicial acts; whereby unworthy persons (whose conversation may be infectious, or whose continuance in the Church may be infamous thereto) are excluded from it, or kept without; or whereby persons upon sufficient presumption of repentance and amendment, are restored to communion.

Thus, considering the sense of the words with the nature of the matter, the Power of the Keys may be understood.

The same may be farther cleared by considering and explicating the Phrases equivalent, by which it is expressed, or interpreted: Such are especially, *Binding*, and *Loosing*; *Remitting*, and *Retaining sins*.

By *Binding* and *Loosing*, our Lord himself interpreteth this power: *I will* (saith he) *give unto thee the Keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*. For understanding the sense of which phrases, we may consider, that things or persons may be several ways bound and loosed.

1. *Binding* may denote any sort of determination, restriction or detention imposed on persons and things; and *Loosing* answerably may signifie the contrary effects. So by just authority to command, or prohibit a thing (whereby its moral quality is determined, it is made good or bad) is to bind that thing, and the persons subject to that authority. Also to abrogate a law, or to dispense with its observance, is to loose the matter of that law, together with the persons concerned in it. Thus it is said, that the Scribes, by prescribing many unprofitable observances, did bind heavy burdens on the People. Again likewise,

Matt. 23. 4.

2. To interpret the sense of a law or doctrine, is a kind of ligation, or solution: it binds by declaring what is commanded, or prohibited, and consequently to what men are obliged: It looses, by shewing what is permitted, or remains indifferent, so leaving men to their freedom. *Quam verò clavem habebant Legis doctor, nisi interpretationem legis?* saith Tertullian. To bind and loose thus, doth plainly belong to the Pastors of the Church, they by office being the interpreters and teachers of God's law.

In Mark. lib. cap. 27.

3. The exercise of any jurisdiction doth *astringe* the offender to punishment, or satisfaction; or doth absolve him from them: it consequently may be called *Ligation*, or *Solution* respectively.

4. The bringing Persons under any contract is a tying them to performance thereof. Thus do the Pastors of the Church bind those, whom they receive into the Church at Baptism, upon undertaking the conditions of Christianity; and those, whom after exclusion from Christian Communion they absolve, upon engagement to lead a better life.

5. The detention of a person in any state, or under any power, is called *Ligation*: and a deliverance out of such a state, or power, *Solution*. So he that (by withholding means, or assurance of pardon) is detained under the guilt of sin, is thereby bound; but he that hath the means and overtures of pardon conferr'd on him, is loosed: and thus do the Pastors of the Church bind and loose; by retaining and remitting sin; the doing which is an instance of this power, expressly granted by our Lord: *Whosoever sins* (saith he) *ye remit, they are remitted to John 20. them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

Now they may be understood to remit, or retain sins divers ways.

1. They do remit sins *dispositive*; by working in persons fit dispositions, upon which remission of sins, by God's promise, is consequent; the dispositions of faith and repentance.

C c c

2. They

2. They remit (or retain) sins *declarative*; as the Ambassadors of God, in his name pronouncing the word of reconciliation to the penitent, and denouncing wrath to the obstinate in sin.

James 5. 14, 15. 3. They remit sins *impetrative*; obtaining pardon for sinners by their prayers; according to that of S. James; *Is any man sick among you, let him call the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him— And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

4. They remit sins *dispensative*, by consigning pardon in administration of the Sacraments; especially in conferring Baptism, whereby, duly administered and undertaken, all sins are washed away; and in the absolving of Penitents, wherein grace is exhibited and ratified by imposition of hands; the which S. Paul calls *χειρουργία*, to bestow grace, or favour upon the Penitent.

By considering all these things, we may competently understand wherein this Power of the Keys doth consist. We might farther illustrate it, by observing the exercise thereof by the Apostles, and in the Primitive Church; by viewing the practice of a like power under the Law (which might perhaps be the rise and pattern hereof) by considering the necessity and usefulness of such a power: but I cannot insist on those particulars, but proceed to the next Article.

The Resurrection of the Body, or Flesh.

THE doctrine of the immortality of the Soul (whereby men are capable of rewards or punishments, according to their doings in this life) hath, in all Religions, been deemed a necessary Principle, and for such (as Cicero and Seneca expressly tell us) hath been embraced by all Nations; having indeed probably from original Tradition been conveyed over all the World. The same also divers Philosophers (Socrates especially, and his Followers) did by natural reason strive to evince true. But Tradition being too slippery, and Reason too feeble throughly to perswade it; Christianity by a clear and full proof (of miraculous works, and sensible experiments) doth assure us of it; The certainty thereof we owe to his instruction, who brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. It plainly shews, that when we dye, we do not (like brut beasts, or other natural bodies, when they appear dissolved) wholly perish; that our souls do not vanish into nothing, nor are resolved into invisible principles, but do return into God's hand, or into the place by him appointed for them, there continuing in that life which is proper to a soul. Neither only thus much doth it teach us concerning our state after this life, but it farther informs us, that our bodies themselves shall be raised again out of their dust and corruption, that our souls shall be reunited to them, and that our persons shall be restored into their perfect integrity of nature; the bringing of which effects to pass, by divine power, is commonly called, *the resurrection of the dead*, or, *from the dead* (*ἐκ νεκρῶν*) and simply the Resurrection; as also being raised, being reduced from the dead— Sometimes also it is called, the *Regeneration* (or iterated nativity) and *being born from the dead*; which terms imply a respect to the body, and to the person of a man, as constituted of body and Soul; for the mere permanency of our souls in being and life could not (with any propriety or truth) be called a resurrection; that which never had fallen could not be said to be raised again; that which did never die, could not be restored from death; nor could men be said to rise again but in respect to that part which had fallen, or that state which had ceased to be. And as to be born at first doth signify the production and union of the parts essential to a man; so to be born again implies the restitution and reunion of the same; a man thereby becoming entirely the same person that he was before. The same is also signified in terms more formal and directly expressive; the *quickening of the dead*; the *vivification of our mortal bodies*; the *redemption of our bodies*; the *corruption*.

corruptible (and *corruptibile* *cor*, this very same corruptible body) putting on incorruption, and this mortal putting on immortality; those who are in the graves hearing Christ's voice, and proceeding forth to resurrection, either of life, or judgment; the awaking of them which sleep in the dust of the earth; the sea, the death, the hell (or universal grave) resigning their dead; which expressions, and the like occurring, do clearly and fully prove the reparation of our bodies, and their reunion to our souls, and our persons becoming in substance completely the same that we were. Which truth of all perhaps that Christianity revealed, as most new and strange, was the hardliest received, and found most opposition among Heathens, especially Philosophers: *Hearing the resurrection of the dead, some of them mocked, others* Acts 17. 32. *said, we will hear thee again of this matter.* So was S. Paul's discourse about this point entertained at Athens; they neglected or derided it, as a thing altogether impossible, or very improbable to happen (as Pliny somewhere counts the revo- Plin. Hist. II. 7. VII. 55. *deliramentum, a childish dotage* to suppose it.) But why it should be deemed either impossible to divine power, or improbable upon accounts of reason, no good argument can be assigned. To recollect the dispersed parts of a man's body, to range and dispose them into their due situation and order; to reduce them into a temper fit to discharge vital functions; to rejoin the soul to a body so restored; why should it be impossible, or seem difficult to him, who did first frame, and temper our body out of the dust, and inspired the soul into it; to him, who out of mere confusion digested the whole world into so wonderful an order and harmony; to him, who into a deep lump of earth inserted such numberless varieties of life; who from seeds buried in the ground and corrupted there, doth cause so goodly plants to spring forth; who hath made all nature to subsist by continual vicissitudes of life and death; every morning, in a manner, and every spring, representing a general Resurrection? (Well might the Prophet Jeremy say, *Oh Lord* Jer. 32. 17. *God, thou hast made the heaven and the earth, by thy great power, and stretched out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee:* there is indeed nothing too hard for omniscient Wisdom to contrive, for omnipotent Strength to execute.) And what difficulties soever fancy may suggest; Can we doubt of that being possible, which experience attesteth done? Ezekiel saw dry bones rejoynted; and re-inspired with life; Ezek. divers instances of dead Persons restored to life are recorded in the Prophetical Writings, and more in the New Testament; but most remarkable is that passage at our Saviour's death, when it is said, that many tombs were opened, and many Matt. 27. 53. *bodies of Saints that had departed rose, and coming out of the tombs, after our Saviour's Resurrection, entered into the Holy City, and did appear to many* (or publickly to the many, *vis. manifeste*) which was a most full and manifest experiment of a miraculous Resurrection, like to that which we believe: but of all, our Lord's own Resurrection doth irrefragably confirm the possibility of our Resurrection; so that S. Paul, with highest reason, might thus expostulate with the incredulous upon this account: *And if Christ be preached* (or assured by testimony) *that he rose* 1 Cor. 15. 12. *from the dead, how say some, that there is no resurrection of the dead? that is, how can any man deny that to be possible, which is so palpably exemplified?*

Neither can the point be shewed improbable, or implausible; but it is rather very consonant to the reason of the thing; and good causes may be assigned why it should be. Man, according to original design and frame, doth consist of soul and body; these parts have a natural relation, an aptitude, and an appetite (as it seems) to cohabit, and cooperate with each other; many actions very proper to man's nature cannot be performed without their conjunction and concurrence; many capacities of joy and comfort (with their opposites) do result thence: the separation of them we see how unwilling, violent and repugnant it is to nature; and we are taught that it is penal, and consequent upon sin, and therefore cannot be good and perfect. Wherefore it is no wonder that God designing to restore man to his antient integrity, yea to a higher perfection; rewarding him with all the felicity his nature is capable of (on the one hand I mean, as on the other hand justly to punish and afflict him according to his demerit) should raise the body, and rejoin it to the soul, that it might contribute its natural subserviency to such enjoyments, and sufferings respectively. Not to omit the congruity in justice, that the bodies themselves, which did communicate in works of obedience and holiness, or of disloyalty and profaneness (which in S. Paul's language, were either servants of

of righteousness unto sanctity, or slaves to impurity and iniquity) should also partake in suitable recompences; that the body which endured grievous hardships for righteousness, should enjoy comfortable refreshments; or that those, which did wallow in unlawful pleasures, should undergo just afflictions.

Many other things might be said to this purpose, but I pass to the next point annexed to this, as in nature, so in order here.

The Life Everlasting.

Acts 24. 15.

Heb. 6. 2.

2 Cor. 5. 10.

John 5. 29.

Matt. 25. 46.

Dan. 12. 2.

Phil. 3. 11.

Luke 20. 35.

THE immediate consequent of the Resurrection (common, as S. Paul expresseth, to just, and unjust) is, as we have it placed in the Catalogue of Fundamentals, set down by the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *nequaquam*, that judgment or doom, by which the eternal state of every person is determined; and accordingly every man must (as S. Paul says) *bear the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil*. Now this state generally taken (as respecting both the righteous and blessed, the wicked and cursed persons) for that it doth suppose a perpetual duration in being and sense, may be called *everlasting life*; although life (as being commonly apprehended the principal good, and because all men naturally have a most strong desire to preserve it; with reference also, probably, to the law, wherein continuance of life is proposed as the main reward of obedience) is used to denote peculiarly the blessed state; and death (the most abominable and terrible thing to nature, the most extreme also of legal punishments threatened upon the transgressors of the law) is also used to signify the condition of the damned; the resurrection of life, and resurrection of damnation; everlasting life, and everlasting punishment being opposed: although, I say, life be thus commonly taken (as also the resurrection it self, by an *anagorai*, is sometimes appropriated to the righteous) yet the reason of the case requires, that here we understand it generally so as to comprehend both states: both being matters of faith equally necessary, and of like fundamental consequence; both yielding the highest encouragements to good practice, and deterrents from bad. For as on the one hand, what can more strongly excite us to the performance of our duty, than an assurance of obtaining hereby so happy a state? What can more efficaciously withdraw us from impiety, than being certain thereby to lose, and fall short of it? so on the other hand, What can more vehemently provoke us to obedience, than being perswaded, that we shall thereby avoid eternal misery? What can more powerfully deter us from sin, than considering, that by the commission of it we shall expose our selves to that wretched state? Infinitely stupid and obdurate we must be, if the consideration what these states are doth not produce these effects.

What is the state of life? It is a state of highest dignity and glory; of sweetest comfort and joy; of joy full in measure, pure in quality, perpetual in duration, in all respects perfect to the utmost capacity of our nature; wherein all our parts and faculties shall be raised to their highest pitch of perfection, our bodies shall become free from all corruptibility and decay, all weakness and disease, all grossness and unweildyness, all deformity and defilement; for they shall (as S. Paul teaches us) be rendred incorruptible, strong, healthful, glorious and spiritual; our souls also shall in their faculties be advanced, in their inclinations rectified, in their appetites satisfied; the understanding becoming full of light, clear and distinct in knowledge of truth, free from ignorance, doubt and error; the will being steddily inclined to good, ready to comply with God's will; free from all weakness, and all perverseness; our affections being set in right order and frame; with a constant regularity tending unto that which is really best, and taking a full delight therein: wherein we shall enjoy the blissful sight of God, smiling in love and favour upon us; the presence of our gracious Redeemer, embracing us with most tender affection; the society of the Holy Angels, and of the just made perfect; whose company and conversation, how unconceivably sweet and delightful must it be? wherein nothing adverse, or troublesome can befall us; no unpleasant or offensive object shall present it self to us; no want or need of any thing

thing shall appear; no care, or fear, or suspicion; no labour or toil; no sorrow or pain, no distast or regret, no stir or contention, no listlessness or satiety shall be felt, or shall come near us; where God (as it is in the *Apocalypse*) will wipe every tear from our eyes (of them who shall come there) and death shall be no more; nor sorrow, nor clamour, nor pain any more: it is in fine a state in excellency surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest pleasures here are but obscure shadows, and faint resemblances; comparable to which no eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard any thing; nor hath it ascended into any heart of man to conceive the like; as *S. Paul* out of the Prophet *Esay* telleth us. Which state, seeing by a pious life we certainly do acquire a right unto, and shall enjoy a possession of, but from an impious life do forfeit all pretence thereto, and shall infallibly be deprived of it: Are we not infinitely mad, are we not extremely enemies, and injurious to our selves, if we do not embrace the one, and eschew the other?

Again, What is the other state, that of death? What but a state of lowest disgrace and ignominy; of utter shame and confusion; of intolerable pains and misery, without any ease or respite, without any hope or remedy, without any cessation or end; wherein we shall not only for ever be secluded from God's Presence and Favour; not only be deprived of all rest, comfort and joy, but detrudd into utmost wretchedness, into a condition far more dark and dismal, more forlorn and disconsolate than we can imagin; which not the sharpest pain of body, nor the bitterest anxiety of mind, which any of us hath ever felt, can in any measure represent; wherein our bodies shall be afflicted continually by a sulphureous flame, not only scorching the skin, but piercing the inmost sinews, our souls shall incessantly be gnawed upon by a worm (the worm of bitter remorse for our wretched perverseness and folly, the worm of horrid despair ever to get out of that estate) under which unexpressible vexations, always enduring pangs of death, always in sense and in desire dying, we shall never be able to dye: which miserable state, since it is by performing our duty surely avoided, since by neglecting, or transgressing God's laws it is inevitable incur'd; if we do not accordingly chuse to demean our selves, how infinitely careless are we of our own good, how desperately bent to our own ruin?

If these considerations make no impression on us, What can any reason effect? What can any words signify? how monstrously sottish, or wild do we appear to be? I conclude with Prayer to Almighty God, That according to his infinite mercy, he by his gracious assistance leading us in the ways of piety and righteousness, would bring us to everlasting life and happiness; that he by the same powerful grace withdrawing us from impiety and iniquity, would rescue us from eternal death, and misery; To him, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be for ever all Glory and Praise. Amen.

D d d A

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